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[A Literary Supplement, devoted to new books, is issued with this number; and another will appear next week.]

NOTES.

THE negotiations for peace still continue amid interminable talk from the six Ambassadors. It seems, however, that the six are at length agreed upon something—the questions of the Capitulations and of the indemnity are to be entrusted to two Commissions of experts; while the delimitation of the new frontier is to be carried out by an international military Commission. Thus the Ambassadors avoid all responsibility and get rid of all labour—which was, no doubt, their main object. At the same time we learn that the Secretaries of the British, Italian and Russian Embassies were sent to Thessaly “in consequence of reports that the Turkish irregular troops had been guilty of excesses during the recent operations. The Secretaries will report to the Ambassadors on the condition of the province where the destruction of villages is said to be considerable.” This admission on the part of the “Times” Correspondent at Constantinople is very significant. At the beginning of the war we predicted that Turkish courage would be found to be backed by Turkish cruelty, and we fear that when the truth is known this forecast will be justified.

The Turk must leave Thessaly without further delay. We see that the Sultan has been foolish enough to attempt in a roundabout way, through German and Austrian prints, to attack Sir Philip Currie. Our Ambassador at Constantinople, it appears, “told the Minister, Tewfik Pacha, to his face that England would never admit that a Mahomedan State should increase at the cost of a Christian country.” The Vienna “Neue Freie Presse” learns in a telegram from Constantinople that “this statement embarrassed even Sir Philip Currie’s colleagues.” And the Viennese print goes on to compare the rough manner and want of diplomatic tact of Sir Philip Currie with the conciliatory spirit of the sympathetic Sir Clare Ford. But the Sultan’s advisers have overstepped the mark. We are rejoiced at Sir Philip Currie’s boldness. We only hope that he will tell Tewfik Pacha, and through Tewfik Pacha his master, several other home truths of the same sterling quality. Europe has had enough of the Turk, and the sooner the Sultan knows it the better. Abdul Hamid is not likely to profit by drawing out the negotiations for peace. Already we want to know more about those villages that, according to the “Times” Constantinople correspondent, have been destroyed in Thessaly.

Mr. Justice Day has won an unenviable reputation for terribly severe sentences; but his recent performance at Salisbury passes all measure. The culprit was only fourteen years of age, but fortunately we need not consider either his offence or the circumstances of the case. The judge can be judged out of his own mouth. According to the “Daily Chronicle,” “Mr. Justice Day, addressing the boy, spoke to the following effect:—He could not do what he would like to have done and have him well flogged and let him go. Prisoner might then have some day become a useful member of society. But as he could not order him to be birched he would sentence him to eighteen months’ hard labour.” No wonder the “Chronicle” speaks indignantly of this “monstrous sentence.” It is almost incredible that a judge could be found who would give a child eighteen months’ hard labour as an equivalent for a whipping; but nine-tenths of the sentence must be remitted; it is most dangerous to outrage the general sense of justice by such iniquitous cruelty.

Though the sentence in the Salisbury case is hardly more than a week old, Mr. Justice Day has managed to distinguish himself again in the meantime. At Wells, on Wednesday, he had before him a tailor of twenty-six years of age charged with stealing. The prisoner was found guilty, and the police proved that he had been a habitual criminal ever since he had been eight years of age. Thereupon his lordship (we quote from the “Times”) “sentenced the prisoner to twelve years penal servitude,” adding that “he hoped the Home Secretary would not interfere to let the prisoner out. On hearing the sentence the prisoner asked to be sent to penal servitude for life, as otherwise he should soon be tried for murder. He was removed from the dock fighting and struggling with the warders.” To fright his criminals out of fear is a sentence on a judge. We hope that Sir Matthew White Ridley will answer Mr. Justice Day’s impertinence by reminding him that, as he was made a judge in the High Court in June 1882, he has just earned his retiring pension.

An even more than holiday dullness has fallen upon home politics, and when Parliament meets for what remains of the Session the chief difficulty of the Whips will be to keep a House. The Jubilee year has, of course, helped to divert attention from politics, but the bold simplicity of Mr. Chamberlain’s Workman’s Compensation Bill and the comprehensiveness of Mr. Balfour’s Irish Local Government scheme have left the Opposition high and dry without a policy. There is plenty of grumbling on both sides of the House about the state of things in Constantinople, but as no one has any plan for rendering the Sultan more reasonable, or the Young Man at Berlin more amiable towards his relatives in Greece, the

grumbling does not lead to much. The wretched South Africa Commission, it is true, still drags on. Sir William Harcourt is still burdened with his rash undertaking to move a Vote of Censure about Greece, and Mr. John Morley with an even more hopeless one on the Irish land question.

The Petersfield election created little interest and, so far as we can see, teaches no lesson. It would almost be as well for the Whips to meet in friendly conference and agree to a table of averages in accordance with which two or three seats and two or three hundred votes a year should be written off the strength of the party in power as a sort of "depreciation." The money, temper, and physical and mental exertion that are wasted in these silly contests is enormous, and as they never make the least difference in the long run, our suggestion is perhaps worth consideration. English Parliaments are now rapidly approximating to the Continental and American model of a body elected for a definite period and destined in nine cases out of ten to run their full term. No one thinks of dissolving the American House of Representatives because Ohio "goes back on McKinley," or because Government Bills are "hung up." Some day our party machines—or rather the rich candidates who finance them—will get tired of keeping up the strain year in year out, as is the case at present, and then the more rational system of a quinquennial or septennial trial of strength, with peace in the interval, will be adopted.

The usual Whitsuntide conferences of Co-operators, Oddfellows, and other great English societies, to which has been added this year an International Miners' Conference, have passed off absolutely without incident. At the last-named there was a great deal of friendly speech-making, but we doubt whether we are much nearer to anything remotely resembling real union or unity of action between workmen in different countries. Even in England, where there are no differences of language, or nationality, or tariffs, it is not always easy to get Northumbria and Nottingham and Wales and Scotland all into line, and the foreigners always want to talk more politics than is agreeable to the Englishman. The friendly societies and co-operative societies still continue to grow amazingly in numbers and wealth. As a rule they seemed to fight shy of the Workmen's Compensation policy, which, if carried to its logical extension of sickness and old-age pensions, cannot but exercise far-reaching effects on the societies.

One of the difficulties of any readjustment of Irish financial relations is, as we pointed out at the time of the Committee's report, that whenever any economy is suggested, those interested in the particular extravagance thus threatened are up in arms, and can generally muster a sufficient following to intimidate the Chief Secretary into yielding. This explains the tremendous pother that is now being raised in Dublin, when the whole legal profession, without distinction of party, is meeting and organizing and memorializing and threatening terrible things, simply because the Irish Government is timidly trying to carry out a small piece of legal reform that ought to have been seen to a generation ago. It is known that the Irish Bench could do its work with about six judges less than its present full complement. Sir Michael Hicks Beach was strong upon this when he was Chief Secretary twenty years ago. Now that he is at the Treasury he has managed to induce the "Castle" to consent to a reduction of three, no appointments being made to the Bench for three successive vacancies. So far this has worked pretty well; but since Lord Justice Barry's death and the refusal of the Government to promote Mr. Atkinson to his place, there has been great clamour. It is likely that Mr. Balfour would have yielded, but for the fact that the promotion of Mr. Atkinson, who is an M.P. for a Northern county, would pretty certainly have meant the winning of the seat by some extreme agrarian reformer, which would have been almost as embarrassing as its loss to the Nationalists. So the readjustment scheme is to be carried through, and the Irish Judicial Department will be spared the cost of three needless judges.

Though at the present time the slightest incident that occurs in South Africa ought to have the greatest significance for Englishmen, it cannot be said that anything of serious importance has happened during the week. Perhaps the most notable thing is that South African shares obstinately refuse to go up; full confidence is apparently still very far from being re-established. The cause is plain. The disputes between President Kruger and the High Court are not yet completely settled; and the Industrial Committee, having listened to a recital of the Outlanders' grievances, has not drawn up a report recommending their abolition. However, it is now extremely probable that the quarrels will come to an end, and more certain that the grievances will be mitigated.

Still, the unpleasant fact remains that Dr. Leyds has been elected Secretary of State by an immense majority. This proves, we think, that he knows too much to be dismissed. That Leyds is dangerously unpopular Kruger is shrewd enough to understand; and unless there was some secret good reason he would have preferred Fischer of the Free State. We are aware that it is said that Dr. Leyds has come to an amicable arrangement with Mr. Chamberlain; but this we decline to believe. Leyds is now, as ever, pursuing his favourite game of intrigue. After trying it in France, where it failed lamentably, he has gone to Holland, where he will have a better reception; from Amsterdam he goes to Berlin, where probably the mad Emperor will cozen both himself and Leyds into a belief in the power of William the Witless in South Africa. But in spite of everything we remain convinced that ultimately the English and the Dutch will come to understand each other, and to live together in the Transvaal as in Cape Colony.

It is without doubt necessary for the reputation of Haileybury School that the whole of the circumstances attending the death of Cuthbert Evans, the boy who committed suicide, and in a letter to the Headmaster accused three of his schoolfellows of being responsible for his death, should be made public. The Headmaster, the Rev. the Hon. E. Lyttelton, has somewhat tardily recognized the impossibility of burking the matter, but his request to the Archbishop of Canterbury to institute an inquiry scarcely squares with his expressed desire to give the utmost publicity to the facts. The Archbishop of Canterbury was formerly the Headmaster of Rugby. It is evident that a schoolmaster, even if he be an archbishop, is not the most fitting court of appeal in such a case. The Rev. the Hon. E. Lyttelton himself has a curious mind. He thinks that the boy's mind was unhinged, his reason for so thinking being that "he did what no schoolboy in his right mind would do; he deliberately, and with nothing to gain, accuses three companions of cruelty." Neither the logic nor the sequence of tenses is here quite what we have a right to expect from a headmaster. No doubt the boy's mind was unhinged; but the point at issue is, how did it become so? and the Headmaster in his first letter simply begs the whole question.

It looks very much as if Japan were to have an opportunity of trying her teeth on the very elastic doctrine for which President Monroe has to stand sponsor. Early in the week there were many "prave 'orts" about Japanese warships and United States cruisers meeting in Hawaiian waters, but the latest news—which comes from San Francisco, it is true—is a little more reassuring. The situation in Hawaii is very simple. The Hawaiian Government have become alarmed at the increasing strength of the tide of Japanese immigration, and have tried to stop it by means which the Japanese believe to be contrary to their treaty rights; Japan, in the newly discovered consciousness of her national strength and dignity, is not inclined to stand any nonsense from a trumpety little Republic of fifth-rate American adventurers: while the United States wants to annex the island and is prepared to resent annexation by any other Power. Meanwhile there is the solid fact that the Hawaiian islands are

geographically situated about midway between Japan and the States, and that the Japanese navy is distinctly a factor to be reckoned with in the Pacific.

Statements more or less rebutted continue to be circulated as to the intention of the Italian Government with reference to Kassala. There is no doubt that the Marquis di Rudini finds Kassala something of a white elephant, and it is probable enough that he has let it be known, as is asserted in a Rome telegram, that the Italian occupation will not in any circumstances continue after the end of the year. By that time it is hoped that the Anglo-Egyptian advance on the Nile will have simplified the situation, and put the Egyptian Government "in a position to re-occupy the district in question," and "there to maintain order and tranquillity." This is the condition precedent to re-occupation mentioned in the Protocol of April 1891, empowering Italy in certain circumstances to occupy the Kassala district, while at the same time reserving the rights of the Egyptian Government "over the said territory."

A striking instance of the official neglect of the claims of science, upon which we commented last week, has just come to our notice. It might have been supposed that in the allotment of seats for a view of the Jubilee procession, when such extensive provision has been made even for Civil servants, to say nothing of representatives of the army, navy, and of the Houses of Parliament, some sort of provision would have been made for representatives of the learned societies. It now appears that no seats have been allotted to any of these. Not even the Presidents of the learned bodies that cluster around Burlington House—the Royal Society, the Royal Astronomical Society, the Society of Antiquaries, the Geological, Chemical, Linnæan, and Physical Societies, the Royal Geographical Society, and the British Association—have been provided for. Still more extraordinary, when application was made for accommodation for the President and Vice-Presidents of the Royal Society, it was refused by the officials of the Board of Works. Imagine any public function in France at which the leading members of the "Institut" would be treated with a like indignity. The thing is the more amazing when one reflects how essentially the progress of the world during the Queen's reign has been a progress in science. Art and literature are very much where they were in 1837. It is science which has advanced and moved the world. Yet British officialdom treats it as though it were non-existent.

It is said that Chang Yin-huan, who will represent the Emperor of China at the Jubilee, is commissioned also to pursue the tariff question which Li Hung-chang broached last year. As Minister, formerly, to the United States and a member, recently, of the Tsungli Yamen, or Board of Foreign Affairs, Chang fulfils every requirement of dignity for the occasion; but whether he is quite competent to discuss a commercial treaty remains to be seen. He will, however, have the able assistance of Sir Chi Chen (Lo Feng-lo), who has taken up his post as Resident Minister at the Court of St. James. It is worth noting, as an instance of the new value attached to English education, that Mr. Chun, who accompanies Chang Yin-huan as secretary and interpreter, was educated at St. Paul's College in Hongkong—where he was schoolmate, by-the-by, of Wu Ting fang, the new envoy to Washington—and is reputed to be an excellent English and Spanish scholar.

The King of Siam, who will soon be in England, travels in his own yacht, the "Maha-chakri," which is officered, however, it may be worth noting, by a captain and two lieutenants of the British navy; three chief quartermasters being also ex-British blue-jackets. The "Maha-chakri" is a vessel of 2,500 tons, carrying six 4.7 inch and a dozen small quick-firing guns. She was built at Leith about four years ago, to His Majesty's order.

Every day's reading illustrates the truism that the only criticism worth considering is that of the creators. For example, the "Daily Chronicle" of Monday last

contained a long article on "Victorian Literature" by Mr. Lionel Johnson. It would be difficult to find a better equipped, or indeed a more competent, critic as critics go. Mr. Johnson has an encyclopedic knowledge of Victorian literature and is master of a literary style which, though hopelessly divorced from life, has excellences of its own. The unreality of it is formidable; its affectations, or, if you will, its conventions, remind us of the nonsense verses of our youth. Mr. Johnson can write of "a mighty or a plangent music, a storm or a murmur of living words," and believe that he is describing Carlyle; but to the man who lives with books and not in life, his style has many good qualities. Its chief virtue is that it is clear and corresponds to well-ordered matter.

Mr. Johnson writes of every one with the knowledge of the day and hour. He gives the opinion of the educated in regard to Tennyson and Browning, to Christine Rossetti and George Eliot, to Darwin and Spencer. But he has nothing to tell us that is both new and true, unless indeed it is about a master in his own line of work. Here is Mr. Johnson at his best: "Pater, prodigal in labour, frugal in production, concentrating himself from the first upon estimating and interpreting the values of rare or supreme personalities, moments, achievements, in the arts, in philosophy, in aspects and ways of life; writing of them with an exquisitely patient search for the word and phrase which were to him the precise equivalents in language to that of which he wrote." But after all this is only half the truth, and not the more important half. The more important half is due, we believe, to Mr. Max Beerbohm, who described Pater as writing English as if it were a dead language.

This knowledge of the day is poor stuff after all. Here is some of it which Mr. Johnson owes to his ears and memory. "There is the art which produced the pure perfection of 'Esmond,' the tragic passion of the Brontë stories, the spacious beauty of 'Adam Bede,' the skilled vivacity of Dickens' masterpieces, or that chief of our historical romances, Reade's 'The Cloister and the Hearth.'" To talk of the pure perfection of "Esmond" is to talk balderdash. Thackeray's "Vanity Fair" was a novel without a hero, and a masterpiece; for Thackeray could not conceive or paint a hero, and when he tried, as he tried in the "Esmond," he produced a pure and perfect prig, a mere curiosity of literature. Prick Esmond, as Browning would say, and a polite phrase would start, or an elegant sentiment, but no blood. Esmond has no life in him; he is merely a lay figure dressed in the picturesque costume of an earlier time. And all "the tragic passion" of the Brontë stories is to be found in Emily's "Wuthering Heights" and more decisively still in Emily's poems. And as for the spacious beauty of "Adam Bede," we will have none of it, preferring "The Mill on the Floss," though that comes to an end when it might have reached a fulfilment. And to praise in the highest "The Cloister and the Hearth" is to echo Sir Walter Besant, and therefore surely to be among those who dwell comfortably in Gath, practising the art of turning platitude into paradox by exaggeration.

On the principle, we suppose, of "lucus a non lucendo," Mr. Joseph Pennell was asked to write an article on Victorian Art in the "Daily Chronicle." In an unhappy hour for his readers he complied with the Editor's request, and the result is such an article on Art as was never written before in English. We presume the language is meant for English, though it is unlike anything that we know under that name. Here is a specimen or two of Mr. Pennell's style: "The fact, really, is not quite the contradiction it may at first seem"; and then he asks the simple unintelligible question in large type, "How does 1897 stand?" on the same principle that moves the ignorant to shout in order to be understood by a foreigner. But the best thing in the paper is Mr. Pennell's reproduction in black and white of "The Fighting Téméraire." Even the Editor appends a note to this informing the public that the picture should be viewed from a distance. True, indeed, the further the better.

THE INTERIM REPORT ON DANGEROUS TRADES.

WE have on more than one occasion in these columns deprecated the placing of any undue restrictions upon the liberties of the business methods of the British manufacturer. But while we have asked for justice tempered with a little sympathy for the manufacturer, we have not failed to ask for justice to his workman. If there is danger to health in any given industry, we are entitled to ask that the danger shall be completely removed, or that it shall at the very least be minimized, and that all available safeguards shall be employed towards that end. For this reason we appreciate the work that is being done by the Departmental Committee which, under the chairmanship of Mr. H. J. Tennant, M.P., has been appointed to inquire into and report upon the conditions of work that prevail in a number of specified trades which have the reputation of being in some degree injurious.

It is a truism that work in a dynamite factory is attended with considerably less risk than in many branches of manufacturing industry which have little reputation (outside the centres where they are carried on) for being dangerous. The revelations made three years ago in connexion with the chemical and white lead trades are matters of common knowledge, by which we have profited considerably; and, thanks to the vigilance of the Factory Inspectors in compelling compliance with the new rules on the part of the employed (who have always been the least solicitous about the preservation of their health) as well as of the employers, the dangers inseparable from these trades have been very largely mitigated. The interim report of Mr. Tennant's Committee deals with the risks attendant upon bronzing in lithographic works; paper staining, colouring, and enamelling; the use of steam locomotives in factories; work in india-rubber factories; the employment of inflammable paints; dry cleaning; and aerated water making, these being the trades deemed by the Committee "to be greatly in need of definite regulations founded upon ascertained facts, for the safety of the lives and health of the workpeople employed." We are convinced from a perusal of the report that in only one or two of these trades is there any such risk as to call for special regulations on the part of the Home Secretary. The worst thing the Committee can find to say about bronzing as an occupation is that the workers are covered with dust, and that they suffer—whether all, many, or few we are not told—from headache, constipation, drowsiness, skin eruptions, respiratory catarrh, and general malaise. "No absolute or specific disease is traceable" to this work: therefore, to our thinking, overalls and respirators are the only precautions necessary. These are advocated by the Committee, which, however, under the same head, makes nine other recommendations that are entirely unnecessary. Arsenical poisoning has been practically stamped out of the paper-staining, colouring, and enamelling business. The employment of white lead in size for "flocking" has a tendency to cause lead-poisoning; but, judging from the experience of the old man who has been in the trade for sixty-two years—"he had known several cases of 'dropped wrist' in all that time"—we are forced to the conclusion that the chances are extremely remote. For the rest, the dangers to be apprehended in the processes of "flocking," bronzing, mica-dusting, and glazing are those "incidental to dusty occupations," and, all dusty occupations being more or less injurious to health, we are treated to thirteen recommendations which are nearly all superfluous—when they are not mischievous. Here is the fifth, as a sample:—"The employers should take measures to secure that every worker should take a bath once a week." We venture to point out that this is an unwarranted interference with the prejudices of the British working-man. The use of steam locomotives in steel works, blast furnaces, and engineering and chemical works, results occasionally in accidents, owing almost entirely to the crass negligence of the workers; therefore, we are to have coupling sticks, sets of rails, footways three feet wide, gangways provided with hand rails and with "stop blocks," and a number of other

safeguards. In dry cleaning there are two dangers, the one from fire, and the other from the injurious effects of inhaling volatile spirit, both of which the Committee exaggerate. They admit that men who have been fifteen and twenty-four years in the trade say they have felt no bad effects from the spirit, and that, though the girls "act silly" occasionally, they, nevertheless, enjoy good appetites. In order to avert both dangers, we have thirteen elaborate suggestions, the enforcement of which would probably drive every employer out of the business. In the manufacture of aerated waters the only risk is that of being cut by the bursting of bottles; whence the necessity, according to the Committee, of providing face-guards of wire-gauze and full-length gauntlets for all workers, and of so fencing the machinery that a fragment of burst bottle cannot by any chance strike the worker. The dangers of working with inflammable paints are more real. The reason why these patent compositions have largely displaced the ordinary oil paints is that they dry quickly, whereby a shipowner is saved some expense in connexion with the dry-docking of his vessels, and is enabled to send them all the sooner to sea. These are two excellent aims which should be encouraged, in view of the competition in the shipping trade. But the use of the inflammable paints is attended with a twofold danger—that of fire, and that of intoxication, followed by unconsciousness and asphyxiation, through the inhalation of the fumes, especially in bunkers, fore and after peaks, ballast tanks, and other confined spaces. The Committee propose that no such confined space shall be painted with a spirit composition, or with a paint the flashing point of which in Abel's apparatus is under 100° Fahr.; that no workman shall carry a naked light with such paint, or work for more than five hours a day, or for more than two and a half hours at a time without an interval of at least one hour; and that no young person shall be permitted to work with a spirit paint, or shall be in a place where it is being used. Does the Committee really suppose that these recommendations are workable, or that any one concerned with the manipulation of spirit paints would carry them out if they were?

In the rubber-making trade, the most dangerous—perhaps the only really dangerous one—of all the trades reported upon by Mr. Tennant and his friends, the risks are of the sort that call for the application of some drastic remedy, or such remedy as is feasible. Naphtha is employed as a solvent for the raw rubber, and it is almost impossible, therefore, to escape from the nauseous and penetrating naphtha fumes. No definite disease can be traced to the inhalation of these fumes, and the worst that the Committee can find to say about this, as about bronzing, is that it is "undoubtedly productive of serious inconvenience, which, if continued, tends to undermine the constitution." Let us, therefore, provide cowls or hoods and fans for the "spreading" rooms, in order to ensure more adequate ventilation; and if the entire space allotted to each worker in the "making-up" rooms be, in the opinion of experts, inadequate, let it be increased. Further, let all "solution," when not in use, be covered over: and in vulcanizing waterproof cloth by the carbon-bisulphide process let the trough containing the liquid be enclosed and self-feeding. If really desirable, let the other recommendations of the Committee in relation to this process be carried out strictly. In a positively unhealthy trade, let all necessary restrictions be imposed, and let us look after the well-being of the worker, even though he be careless of it himself. But we are entitled to ask in return that no superfluous or vexatious restrictions shall be placed upon the employer. We regret to say that fully two-thirds of the recommendations of this Committee are both superfluous and vexatious, besides being in some instances impracticable and foolish.

THE KING OF SIAM'S VISIT AND THE MEKONG QUESTION.

THE King of Siam is in Europe, and the Mekong question is sure to be soon revived. French diplomacy may be said to have sustained a "check";

however, the Quai d'Orsay can afford to sustain checks after gaining so much at so slight a cost. After the startling events of July and August 1893, which deprived Siam of thirty thousand square miles of territory and many millions of francs as indemnity, it will be remembered that the matter resolved itself into an adjustment of boundaries, French and British Commissioners being appointed with the view of "settling amicably" the question of frontiers, together with the delimitation of a buffer State separating British Burmese from French Indo-Chinese territory. It must be owned that Great Britain, however tardily Lord Rosebery may have acted while French bayonets were unlocking Siamese treasure-houses, has scored ever so slightly over this business of the neutral zone. Our Commissioner, Mr. J. G. Scott, performed his allotted task with commendable zeal; and the risks run by him and his plucky wife in traversing a country so dangerous as the border-lands of Cambodia and the Laos district have not been encountered in vain. England has let it be seen that she does not propose to evacuate a position that enables her to control the extremely one-sided game which is still undecided on the banks of the Mekong.

There remains the memory of the audacious proposition made to Lord Rosebery by the late M. Waddington on behalf of the French Government, that England and France should partition the Siamese kingdom. "I was unable," says Lord Rosebery in the Blue Book, "to conceal my astonishment at this proposal." We should hope not. The treaty signed at Bangkok in the fall of 1893 provided, *inter alia*, against Siam exercising the right to police her own territory up to within so many miles of the territory "acquired" by France. Seeing that this region is among the most desolate and brigand-infested in Siam, and seeing also that acts of brigandage have constantly been urged against King Chulalongkorn's government, the reason of such a preposterous proviso is not, perhaps, far to seek. Unhappy little Siam, indeed, is the picture of abject misery to-day. Her late Crown Prince, who was a most promising man, was struck down by death at the moment when his bright intellect might have been brought to bear upon the more enfeebled intelligences of the Seena-Boddee. His father is in failing health, and we have reason to know that at any moment the crown of Siam may descend upon the youthful head of the new Crown Prince. The nobility, whose name is legion, are a house divided against itself; and, in short, it would not be difficult to name the most unhappy country on the map of Asia to-day—unhappy, that is, in the sense of knowing that she is doomed.

Significant enough have been the changes in the *personnel* of those engaged in ministering to the external interests of France and England in this quarter. M. de Lanessan, during whose term as Governor-General of French Indo-China the dispute as to the ownership of the Mekong's *rive gauche* assumed its acutest phase, fell through intrigue at home coupled with his own indiscretions abroad. M. Pavie, who may be regarded as the most competent man ever connected with the French schemes of earth-hunger in these latitudes, also came "home"; while the affairs of Madagascar have been occupying the attention of the extremely able M. le Myre de Vilers. On the English side both the Minister (Captain Jones, V.C.) and the Consul (Mr. E. H. French) who safeguarded British interests at Bangkok during the little war of three years ago, are there no longer. We may seem to be taking a pessimistic view when we say that the outlook, so far as regards the innocent victim of all the pother, is blacker rather than brighter. But to whom shall Siam turn in her hour of need when it comes, as come it surely will? May Lord Salisbury be trusted to see that the right is maintained? Madagascar England did not want; Siam, with its priceless stores of rice for Hongkong and the Straits, it must hold inviolate. The proverb which runs that "an ambassador is one who is sent abroad to lie for his country" is singularly applicable from end to end of France's dealings with the Kingdom of the White Elephant. And throughout it all France remains firmly fixed at the very gates of Bangkok.

WORDS OF CONSOLATION AND OF CAUTION TO MR. JEROME.

LAST week this journal loosed "Frank Danby" against Mr. Jerome K. Jerome. I cannot help feeling that the redoubtable Amazon assailed her victim with a ferocity which he scarcely deserved. I think that a far milder assault (such as Mr. Brooks Jun. recently inflicted on Mr. Labouchere—a few light blows and then an attitude of reasonable inquiry) would surely have sufficed in the case of Mr. Jerome K. Jerome. Let me, in my good nature, bend awhile over the body of this evilly entreated man, pour some oil into his wounds, and give him some sound advice. Let not Mr. Jerome mistrust my approach. I admit that, when I saw him prone and bleeding in these columns, my first impulse was to pass by on the other side; but—whatever one's former opinion of him and his work—a wounded man is a wounded man, and I would fain tend Mr. Jerome.

Let me assure him that I shall not taunt him, as "Frank Danby" taunted him, for being "Cockney." The narrowness of his outlook, the vulgarity and fatuousness of his jokes, his bad grammar, are not things which excite my anger. I do not myself admire them much, but, such as they are, they are racy, peculiar and distinct. In his earlier books Mr. Jerome used these gifts with effect, quickly endearing himself to the great heart of the British Pub. In his latest book, "Sketches in Lavender," he uses them still to a certain extent, as may be seen in the light of "Frank Danby's" anthology. But, somehow, the old spirit seems fainter. There are signs of chastened endeavour, and even the description of a small boy smoking a clay-pipe is wrought with a certain reticence. In fact, Mr. Jerome seems to be growing ashamed of his old manner, growing too genteel for his old public. There is a rather acrid flavour in his story about the clever young man who violated all his own artistic canons by writing bad plays, in order to please the public—"he was rapidly climbing," says Mr. Jerome, "into the position of the most successful dramatist of the day." One wonders that experience has not taught the author of "Dick Halward's Rise" and other plays that three or four acts of twaddling dialogue and threadbare episodes do not necessarily command success. It is quite true that the writer of plays, being more nearly exposed to the public, is more sorely tempted to fawn upon stupidity than is the writer of poems, novels or essays. But the public is an ungrateful body and, sooner or later, leaves its panders in the lurch. Honesty in play-writing, so long as it be backed by ability, is by far the best policy—it wins in the end—and Mr. Robert Buchanan has only himself to blame that he is not a very popular playwright. Indeed, Mr. Buchanan is one of the very few instances of the man who, with real ability for good work, is able to do bad work. Usually, when a writer of bad things says that he could be a great artist if only he were a man of independent means, one should take the statement with many grains of salt. It is almost impossible for an artist to degrade his pen; he may be obliged to write about trivial matters for which he cares little, but he cannot write badly about them. Well! This rather long digression was the only way to my particular point. Mr. Jerome's recent plays have not, I believe, had long runs. Mr. Jerome seems to have thought that, therefore, vulgarity is not so popular as it once was. Mr. Jerome has always written on the low level, and what more natural than that he should wish to soar now (through the window of an empty box-office) to a higher, rarer atmosphere in literature? Probably Mr. Jerome does not realize that, in writing (as he thought) for the public, he was writing truly for himself. "Hang the public!" he seems to have whispered, "I will do something classy!"

From this higher, rarer atmosphere, Mr. Jerome looks down callously on the puppets of his early triumph, the bank-clerk, the general servant "and such." Nothing short of high life above stairs will satisfy him, insomuch that "the Countess and Lord C— were staying with her ladyship's sister, the Hon. Mrs. J—, at G— Hall, some ten miles distant, and were to drive over in the morning." The then Earl

of — was in Norway, salmon-fishing." In the story called "Blasé Billy," a delicate tragedy of *le beau monde*, one has a good example of what seems to be Mr. Jerome's new manner. "It was towards the end of August. He and I appeared to be the only two men left to the Club. He was sitting by an open window. . . . I drew my chair a little closer and remarked: — 'Good-morning.' He suppressed a yawn, and replied, 'Mornin'—dropping the 'g.'" Mr. Jerome then formed a resolve "to break down the imperturbable calm" of this man. He lit a cigarette (not the pipe, notice!) and remarked that his companion "was not shooting." A friendship soon ripened between Mr. Jerome and "the Honourable Billy," who was "a useful man to have about one. In matters of fashion one could always feel safe following his lead. . . . Shortly described"—Mr. Jerome has joined the epigrammatists—"one might have likened him to a Gaiety Johnny with brains." To the surprise of all his friends, the Honourable Billy became engaged to a young lady, who, says Mr. Jerome mordantly, "went to Kensington for her religion and to Mayfair for her morals." After their marriage, Mr. Jerome was a constant visitor at the house. One evening "he arrived a little before his time and was shown up to the drawing-room by the soft-footed butler. They were sitting in the dusk with their arms round one another. . . . Thus the summer and the winter passed pleasantly for the Honourable Billy, and then, as luck would have it, he fell ill in the very middle of the London season." Throughout her husband's illness, "the Hon. Mrs. Drayton" (as Mr. Jerome, fondly insistent, always calls her) was the most attentive of nurses. But the sick man chafed at the thought that his wife was losing all the gaieties of the season, and, every evening, to humour him, she would deck herself in jewels and a "costume," leaving him as though for some entertainment. Mr. Jerome tells us that she never really went to any entertainment at all. To him, in a touching scene, she confessed her strategy. She dropped her head on her bare arms; and Mr. Jerome "turned away and looked out of the window for a while." At last, the well-born husband died. Mr. Jerome called to condole with the widow, hinted that the world believed her to be heartless, and asked leave to spread the story of her devotion. The Hon. Mrs. Drayton said she would rather it were kept secret. Mr. Jerome made spread it, however. So we must assume that the Hon. Mrs. Drayton has followed her husband to the grave—which only heightens the whole tragedy.

That such stuff is pitiable is quite the kindest thing to be said. I have small faith in the reformatory power of criticism, but I cannot help hoping that Mr. Jerome may abandon stories of high life. He cannot, for one thing, tell a story; his talent does but fit itself to a random sequence of jokes and anecdotes. Moreover, beyond bearing what was, I believe, the maiden name of Lady Randolph Churchill, he has not the slightest qualification for writing about our aristocracy. For all I know, he himself may move in aristocratic circles, but that is not pertinent to my contention. A close experience does not carry a writer far, and is necessary to no writer. I do not move in aristocratic circles, (though I should like to,) and yet I would back myself to write a story in which their atmosphere was nicely rendered. An aristocratic *milieu* has always charmed my imagination. It is hardly too much to say that a painted coronet on the panel of a barouche or brougham sends the blood coursing swiftly through my veins, and that a hatchment, hung from a sombre house-front, draws tears to my eyes. It is this very snobbishness, sense of beauty, call it what you will, which, veiled and restrained in ultimate expression, makes the successful aristographer. Any one, capable of writing the story whose outline I have just given, is not likely to understand what I mean. If he be wise, however, Mr. Jerome will take my meaning on trust, and will abandon high life, as a literary motive, for evermore. No less will he refrain from repeating so fearful a performance as his "City of the Sea," a kind of Norse legend, written in the form of a prose-poem. Mr. Jerome's fancy does not lend itself to legends, nor his style to prose-poems. It is all very well to say that "there stood a town of

seven towers and four rich churches, surrounded by a wall of twelve stones' thickness, making it, as men reckoned then, a place of strength and much import; and the monks, glancing their eyes downward from the Abbey garden on the hill, saw beneath their feet its narrow streets, gay with the ever passing of rich merchandise," or that "many a groan of dying man, many a shriek of murdered woman, many a wail of murdered child, knocked at the Abbey door upon its way to Heaven"—but, on the other hand, it is still better *not* to say it.

Clumsy pretentiousness is always amusing. It is one of the world's stock-jokes, and, whether in real life, or as a motive of Plautian comedies or of Mr. Gus Elen's most famous song, it never palls on me. For my own part, I should like Mr. Jerome to persevere in his new vein. A certain power of appreciating good work gives me an inverse pleasure in bad work. I prefer Mr. Jerome's humour unconscious. But then I am writing this article, not with any selfish motive, but as a Good Samaritan, a well-wisher. I warn Mr. Jerome that my delight in his new vein does not signify success for him, and I advise him, for his own sake, to hark back. The fact that his recent plays have not been triumphs does not argue that vulgarity has lost its market. Mr. Jerome fails as a playwright, simply because he cannot write good plays; because he lacks dramatic power, sense of contrast and construction. But I am sure that, if he will but use his talent as he used it in his early books and as he still uses it, to some extent, in these "Sketches in Lavender," he will always be popular. His talent is of a sordid, limited order, but it is real enough in its way, and it is, as I have said, distinct. Let him not make another grotesque incursion upon a territory which he cannot conquer. I know no more wanton act of literary filibustering than this Jerome's Raid (or Plan). Complete success could alone have justified it; but it was a hare-brained enterprise, and could only end in one way. Retreat is the only chance now left to Mr. Jerome. Let him retreat, therefore, while there is yet time, to his own land, and resume his old business. Let him forget the Hon. Mrs. Drayton and the town of seven towers and four rich churches. Having kindled his discarded pipe and cocked his bowler to its old angle of 45, let him grin, as of yore, across the concertina. So shall he prosper. MAX BEERBOHM.

AN OLD RETAINER.

EIGHTY or a hundred years ago the type of which Master Jessey was one of the last relics was, I suppose, common enough. But by the late 'sixties and early 'seventies, when I remember the old man, the privileged, unpaid retainer of the old English country house had become practically extinct. Master Jessey was, in fact, a belated survivor of a system which railways, machinery and the stress and hurry of modern life have driven from their ancient abiding places.

He was never called anything else than "Master" Jessey in the village in which he lived; that old-fashioned title signifying, I am inclined to think, in his case a rank somewhat below the large farmers and graziers of the vicinity, and yet a good deal above the poorer folk. The old man came of good Warwickshire yeoman stock. Latterly the family had declined a little from its former place, and Master Jessey's relations, whose ancestors had once owned their own land, were now chiefly substantial tenant-farmers under the great landlords of the county. Master Jessey himself had been bred up as a maltster, and, in the earlier half of the century had, I have always understood, pursued that business in a small, easy-going, desultory sort of way. But he had never much head or inclination for affairs of any kind. By degrees he let slip or abandoned what little business he had ever possessed, retired to a cottage, and devoted himself to the only life that matched with his ideas—the life of the open air. He must have possessed some small means of his own; his wants were few and his habits of the simplest kind. A mug of ale and a pipe of tobacco were among the few luxuries in which he indulged himself.

Released from the cares of the maltstering business, Master Jessey, in his own slow fashion, turned about

him for an occupation. In due time he settled himself as unpaid retainer at a certain quiet country house just upon the outskirts of the village. That must have been in the early 'forties. I first remember the old man in the middle 'sixties, when he had been long settled in his occupation. His plan of life was something of this kind. He usually appeared at the house soon after nine in the morning. If there were things to be done, he stayed about most of the day, receiving by way of fees a pint mug of good ale now and again, his midday meal, and, if he were late, his supper. The care of the bees; all matters pertaining to rabbiting; the capture of fish; the washing and cleaning of the muzzle-loading guns used in those days; the killing of pigeons, ducks, geese and poultry; all these and many other minutiae were looked upon as belonging to the department of Master Jessey. He was great at ratting, but with horses and gardening he meddled but little. In September he accompanied the partridge-shooters, helped to carry the bag, and looked after the dogs. He was never much of a man for the gun, although he loved sport of every kind in his own way. I fancy his habit of body and brain was too slow and deliberate for the attainment of much success with the fowling-piece. I have seen him take a steady pot-shot from over a hedge at a rabbit feeding in the grass; and I believe he has been known to shoot rooks sitting; but beyond these attainments his ambitions seldom ranged. Fox-hunting he viewed only from the distance, but it is certain that the fox itself was as sacred an animal in his eyes as in those of the most staunch supporter of the county hounds.

I can always recall Master Jessey busying himself in his deliberate way in the stone-flagged courtyard of the old brown sandstone house to which he had attached himself. Sandy, the setter, lay outside his kennel in the sunshine, watching affectionately and with some interest the old man as he moved slowly from the brew-house to the pigeon-house, or from the walled garden, where the beehives stood, to and from the court. He never wore trousers to the end of his life. Drab small-clothes, with gaiters to match, clothed his nether limbs. His deep-skirted coat of the same material never altered, as long as I can remember him, in its old-fashioned cut. His grey head was invariably crowned by a tall grey chimney-pot hat. His neckerchief was folded twice round his neck and tied in a bow in front. He was a tall, heavy, big-framed old fellow, grey-eyed, somewhat fleshy of face, clean shaved of course, with scraps of whisker high up on the cheeks, reminding one irresistibly of the period of Waterloo. The old man always spoke in the homely rural vernacular of Warwickshire and Northamptonshire, upon the borders of which he lived. He called, for instance, a gate a "geeat," a rabbit a "rawbut," an acorn an "akkern," a perch (fish) a "pearch." A heron he termed a "molyerne," the rightful derivation of which I have never been able to satisfactorily explain. And he used invariably the verb "be" instead of our modern "are." "What booyes you be," for instance, he would remark to us, after some youthful escapade. The old man, although a bachelor, liked nothing better than to have lads about with him, to whom he could impart some of his rabbiting and fishing lore. He loved above all things a day's ferreting, and would dig for hours with the utmost zest and patience sooner than a rabbit slain by the ferret should be left lying in its burrow.

Master Jessey was always a great hand with the bees. He had the entire management of the hives in his own hands, and would have deeply resented—so far as his slow, patient spirit would allow—any encroachment upon his rights and privileges. He understood nothing of the modern management of bees, and in those days his charges were always housed in the old-fashioned straw "skeps." Still, he managed very well and was always pretty successful with his honey. When the making of the sweet, home-made honey-wine, known as mead, was about, the old man was naturally in great request. After the making of the mead Master Jessey brewed liquor from the lees and remnants an inferior and weaker liquor for his own consumption. This he called "metheglum." The "metheglum," when bottled, went down to his own cottage.

I never saw the old man hurry himself except in two

instances: when bees were swarming and had to be followed, or when a wounded rabbit seemed likely to reach its hole and escape the gunner. Then the tall, heavy-framed old fellow would bestir himself a little.

A day's pike-fishing in a neighbouring lake or reservoir was always a red-letter day with Master Jessey. He knew nothing of modern angling; the gorge-hook and live-baiting were his methods. And as we lads drew one of the gleaming, yellow-sided, white-bellied fish exhausted to the punt-side, and finally landed it safely at the bottom amongst our feet, there was always a peculiar twinkle of satisfaction in his grey eye as he took out his jack-knife, and, grasping the great fish by the eyes with thumb and finger, deftly ended its existence.

He was fond of the angle and loved on a fine July or August day to lure lusty perch from deep quiet waters with hook and worm. But of all forms of recreation that appealed to Master Jessey one peculiar to his own district had, I think, for him the greatest of joys. Between a certain old reservoir and a canal some miles distant there ran through the rich pastures of that quiet corner of Warwickshire a stream locally known as the "Feeder." This stream used in those days to swarm with fish—perch, roach, gudgeon and dace—and it was the custom to net it at the bridges, and so capture a great store of spoil. The big sweet-fleshed perch—scores of them over a pound weight—and the silvery delicious gudgeon were in particular always welcome at the house to which Master Jessey had attached himself. Armed with the net, two plunging poles, a bucket or two, and the paraphernalia of lunch, we were accustomed to accompany the old man once or twice in a summer down to the Feeder. Master Jessey disdained to carry his luncheon ale in glass bottles; he preferred instead to fill up one of the old-fashioned wooden bottles—then used for the field-labourers—with right home-brewed ale from the cool cellar and carry it with him on these excursions. That wooden bottle held a gallon of ale, all of which on a warm summer's day Master Jessey could comfortably dispose of.

Arrived at the Feeder, the net was set at one of the small field-bridges and the plunging began some hundred and fifty yards away—one plunger on either side the stream. The frightened fish were gradually driven into the net until the crucial moment came; then the leads were sharply picked up, the net hoisted over on to the bridge and its gleaming contents picked out. Those were great days for Master Jessey, and he was particular in seeing that the performance was carried out with due ceremony and detail, exactly as had been done by his father before him. He looked always to fill at least two large buckets with fish—mainly perch and gudgeon—from such a morning's work, and he was seldom disappointed.

With these and other ancient and innocent forms of recreation Master Jessey filled in the details of his simple existence. It was scarcely the life of the nineteenth century. It took one back rather to the placid days of country life in the time of Isaac Walton. The old man has lain nearly twenty years now in the quiet village churchyard. Looking back, one wonders that such a character could have survived so far into this generation of haste and unrest.

H. A. BRYDEN.

THOMAS HOPE McLACHLAN.

SOME ten or twelve years ago the writer of this article was wandering through the galleries of the Royal Academy in the difficult quest of some picture possessing other qualities than mere cleverness or inability, when a landscape, recalling by its dignity and unobtrusiveness some of the older masters of the English school, attracted his attention. The painting, it is scarcely necessary to add, was "skied" and surrounded by works whose temper and colouring were very different from its own. The following year my eye was again caught by another landscape by the same hand, which also was "skied" in company with the kind of pictures which usually enjoy that honour at the Academy. To come at any real judgment of these landscapes under such circumstances was impossible; so I resolved to write to their author, asking if he would allow me to see

some of his paintings in the more favourable light of his own studio. In the event, as it turned out, my expectations were exceeded: I found not only an exquisite artist, but a fine and charming personality, and, as the course of years proved, one of the few men whom I count it a distinction to call my friend. In this way came about my first introduction to Thomas Hope McLachlan, whose name, I believe, is so little known that I may be excused should I give a brief account of his career. Born at Darlington in 1845, "he was educated at Merchiston Castle School, Edinburgh, and Trinity College, Cambridge; whence, having been bracketed first in the Moral Science Tripos, he came up to London and entered as a student at Lincoln's Inn. In due course he was called to the Bar, and for some years practised in the Court of Chancery. But the claims of Art were too urgent with him; and finally relinquishing the Law, he devoted himself altogether to landscape-painting. From the first his pictures were to be seen on the walls of the Academy and the Grosvenor; and later, amongst other places, at the New English Art Club, the New Gallery, and at the Institute of Painters in Oil Colours, of which last body he was a member. At the present moment a notable water-colour of his hangs at the Academy; at the New Gallery hangs a notable oil-picture. These were the last works his hand touched. Before either exhibition opened, in the early morning of 1 April, unexpectedly, very quietly, he passed away." I quote these sentences from a little notice prefixed to a catalogue of his works, which a few friends desiring to pay a last tribute to his memory have brought together, and are exhibiting, in a half-private way, in their studios at 98 James Street, Buckingham Gate. Some forty pictures only are shown, but they include many of Mr. McLachlan's finest paintings; and his character, as an artist, may be very well seen in them.

Above all things he had design. Invention, composition, drawing, colouring, all the hundred and one qualities which go to make a picture, were in his case determined and ordered by a fine imagination and a distinguished temperament. One of the earliest paintings in this little exhibition, "A Dutch Harbour," is remarkable for showing the loving care with which he studied the older English landscape-painters who were working at the beginning of the century; and the charm of dignity and fine seriousness, which he acquired from them, is never wanting in his pictures. But the painters on whom he really fashioned himself were Cecil Lawson, and, at a later period, Jean François Millet. The influence of Millet is to be seen in what is, perhaps, the powerful work shown here, "The Wind on the Hill"; a moor swept by the wind, with the figure of a girl, followed by some sheep, against a stormy sky. In rendering the sense of wind over a landscape, or of movement in the sky, Mr. McLachlan was especially fortunate. In such compositions, however, as "A Mellow Evening," or "At Shut of Eye," all reminiscence of Millet disappears, and the painter is entirely himself: and these low-toned and richly coloured pictures of Nature in her most solemn and mysterious moments are romantic landscapes of rare originality. They form, however, but one side of his art: the sense of light and atmosphere in "The Receding Tide" recalls a sea-piece by Bonnington, without recalling his manner or technique; and another study of clouds sailing over a Yorkshire hill, called "A Breezy Morning," has the very breath of the country about it. But on occasion when his subject required it, he was able to use his poetic faculty without foregoing this literal truth to Nature. We see it in such a piece as "Ships that pass in the Night," where the intensity of the starry sky seen between the breaks of the drifting clouds and the depth of tone in the purple sea are rendered not only with truth, but with a sense of profundity and mystery which lifts the picture into the region of the imagination.

I have preferred to indicate Mr. McLachlan's character as an artist rather than attempt to express my own estimate of his genius, which might be put down to friendship or partiality. I may add, however, that the exhibition of his pictures will be open from 12 to 19 June inclusive, and may be seen for the asking, by any one who may wish to judge of them for himself.

HERBERT P. HORNE.

ALEXANDER THE GREAT.

"A Marriage of Convenience." A Version of Alexandre Dumas's "Mariage sous Louis XV." By Sydney Grundy. Haymarket Theatre, 5 June, 1897.
 "The Tempest." Reading by the Elizabethan Stage Society. Steinway Hall, 4 June, 1897.
 "Settled Out of Court." A play in four acts, by Estelle Burney. Globe Theatre, 3 June, 1897.

THE Haymarket management no doubt had its reason unsettled by several hundred performances of "The Red Robe" when it recently threatened London with a New Drama by a critic-dramatist. In a happy hour it was turned from this road to ruin by the genius of Dumas—not *filis*, but Alexander the Great—who, though dead, yet speaketh with most miraculous organ. Nothing could have been better timed. Our playgoing public, who in Dumas's own time, incapable of appreciating his witty and wise-hearted humanity, were still barbarously rioting in stories of crimes and passions enacted by crude stage idols and devils, are now becoming civilized enough to feel his charm. Dumas was not, like his son, a man of problems. He had no need for them, being full of stories about charming imaginary people, whose affairs he manipulated with such delicacy, geniality and humour, that nothing that they could do ever raised any moral questions. What in the son's work is murder, adultery, and the rest of the seven deadly sins, is in the father's simply natural history. Not that Dumas by any means flatters humanity. If he is quite free from cynicism, it is because he did not begin with credulity, and is interested and amused where the credulous are disappointed and embittered. There is no goody-goody optimism or vulgar Jingo patriotism about him. His kings are spoiled children; his heroes lapse into follies and petty rascalities, and have a quite unheroic estimate of the value of money and of their own skins (witness D'Artagnan making a "corner" in straw when the Court unexpectedly sleeps out, and Henri Quatre's fright at the siege of Cahors); he is on sufficiently familiar terms with women to make his most ravishing heroines much less suggestive of sex illusion on the author's part than Cesarine or Becky Sharp; and his villains are not monsters, but simply defective men, on whose account he does not fear that the world will fall to pieces. But if he does not idolize humanity, he is never unkind to it, and is generally willing to lend it some of his own pleasantest qualities to make a show with. He finds a point of view for everybody that makes them bearable; and he is always considerate to his audience: for example, his account of the torturing of La Mole and Coconnas, though it leaves a sufficiently vivid impression of the atrocity of the process, is much more agreeable reading than the love scenes of Dumas *filis*; and his own love scenes are unembarrassing and unembarrassed without being the least prudish. On the whole, Dumas is the best of all the storytellers; and as he was as apt at dialogue as at narrative, he is an unrivalled storytelling playwright. If our playgoing public takes to his historical romances instead of to clumsy modern imitations of them, and to translations of his plays by Mr. Grundy instead of to stage versions of those imitations, why, so much the better!

To be thoroughly convinced that Dumas is congenial to our actors, all that is necessary is a visit to the Haymarket to see how perfectly happy the company there is in "A Marriage of Convenience." It is an ideal play for them. They escape the jar of new ideas, the bewilderment of new standards, and the terrible doubt as to whether the comparative frankness and rudeness of the more equal terms of modern intercourse between men and women may not be mistaken for the bad manners of the period when women were childish enough to think it worth their while to exchange all the genuine consideration which men require from one another for the obsequiousness a shopwalker shows to the customer he intends to cheat. And instead of escaping all this, as actors must in plays by contemporary authors, at the cost of having stupid, common, behindhand parts in third-rate sincere plays, or else unreal parts in venally conventional ones, they have brilliant, witty, delicate

dialogue, flattering characterization, and an atmosphere of artistic and literary distinction. You cannot now say that Miss Winifred Emery and Mr. Terriss are wasting their talent on stuff that might be served up in penny numbers to the Boy Brotherhoods of Hoxton and Bethnal Green, as they certainly were in "One of the Best" and "Under the Red Robe." Dumas *père* is good enough for anybody: literary connoisseurs of all kinds, from Morris and Rossetti to Henley and Stevenson, and nameless thousands of lovers of the highest fiction, have revelled in him and scorned as prigs and pedants the dullards who did not know the histories of D'Artagnan, Chicot, Balsamo, Henri Trois, and Louis Treize by heart—or, if they did, were afraid to own to a taste shared by boys and girls. Dumas has always kept the best company—company which was apt to be bored by his son (for whom, one fancies, he must have felt much as Alexander VI. for the correct and serious Cæsar Borgia); and to that company the Haymarket stars can conclusively refer anyone who disparages the rank of their author.

An incidental advantage of the substitution of "A Marriage of Convenience" for "Under the Red Robe" is that it does not debase the public by setting it to admire spurious and vulgar imitations of chivalry and gallantry, and, as an inevitable consequence, histrionic guff and bugaboo instead of fine acting. When the public was encouraged to think Gil de Berauld a fine fellow, and to fall in love with a senseless stage doll like Renée de Cocheforêt, it was impossible not to feel that its education was being neglected, and its childishness exploited. Let us rejoice, therefore, that "A Marriage of Convenience" is an educative piece as well as a captivating one. The Countess de Candale is not a New Woman; but she is a human being; and Miss Winifred Emery, in impersonating her, is really acting—for the first time for eighteen months—and acting very delightfully. Candale is a real gallant gentleman; and such sense of inadequacy as that obsolescent ideal leaves nowadays is fully satisfied by the delicate irony of his point of honour—"Remember: I will not be made ridiculous." But he is still a gentleman according to his lights; and Mr. Terriss can play him with perfect self-respect, not forcing his own grace, skill, and distinction of sympathetic sentiment on a stuffed Guy, but realizing a quite natural and interesting picture of humanity at its pleasantest.

The audience, to its credit be it said, enjoyed the change from sawdust to flesh and blood immensely. That is the good side of our playgoers. They are invariably unfaithful to fine art when it is absent, and will console themselves uproariously and shamelessly with the vilest illicit substitutes. But when it is brought back to them they heartily admit that there is nothing like it after all, and settle down lovingly with it until its next holiday.

There is of course a side on which "A Marriage of Convenience" is vulnerable to advanced criticism. Its characterization is the trait-mimicry of Shakespeare and Scott, not the life-study of Balzac, Meredith and Ibsen. The play is an entertainment, not a serious revelation of humanity to itself. It has a happy ending, as inorganic as a pseudo-Mozartian coda in an old concert version of a Gluck overture. Everything in the play happens because it is the amusing or touching thing to happen, not because it must happen so, given the characters and circumstances, whether we like it or not. Consequently, if you have acquired from Ibsen the taste for glimpses into the engine-room under the decks of society, you may find that you have left Dumas behind in Scott's and Shakespeare's company. In any case you are likely to feel that certain passages, like old pastel pictures, have retained their colour but lost their bloom and sparkle. The happy ending is trite; the choleric old general is an exploded convention; the levity of the amended marriage relations is less credible and more shocking nowadays than the profligacy of the original "convenient" ones. But it is wonderful how little of this wear and tear there is after the lapse of half a century; and how perfectly Dumas seems to be in our confidence as to all shortcomings, as if he knew perfectly well about these serious matters, but would not trouble us, his guests, with them after dinner. For my part, I hope Mr. Grundy will pursue

his researches into the works of the Immortal Alick, and that the Haymarket may long keep them between us and his degenerate imitators.

The performance on the first night was as successful as the hearts of the managers could desire. The audience rose with unexpected buoyancy to Dumas's high comedy; and when Miss Emery gave it a lump of sugar in the shape of a little shower of tears in one of the most effective episodes in the third act, its enthusiasm knew no bounds. At the end, it remained frantically demonstrating until the company revolted against further calls; though even then Mr. Terriss was dragged from his washhand basin and forced, soap in hand, on the stage, to receive a final salvo. The soubrette part was played by Miss Adrienne Dairolles, who did not find, as she easily might in a new play, her cleverness and address hindering instead of helping her. Mr. Cyril Maude amused himself with the part of Valclos to an extent that would have considerably astonished the author; but as the audience was equally amused, remonstrance is vain. I always give myself away to Mr. Maude by laughing under the spell of his genuine comic force and impersonative faculty, though he shocks my critical pedantry unmercifully by his naïve incapacity for distinguishing between acting and clowning. He mixes up genuine strokes of character, executed with perfect artistic dignity, with the galvanic grins and knock-kneed attitudes of a funny man at a children's party. And both are undertaken with the same unsparing conscientiousness, and without the faintest apparent suspicion that there is any difference in their class or value. In this play, for instance, he has to sit for a few minutes on a sofa whilst Mr. Terriss tells a story which makes him acutely ridiculous. It is not necessary for him to meddle in the effect: a Lord Chief Justice in his robes and at his gravest would be laughed at in such a situation. But Mr. Maude likes acting, and has no belief in letting the play do its own work. He comically draws up his heels, knees, and shoulders, and drags down the corners of his mouth, with the fullest persuasion that unless he did this there would be nothing to laugh at. At such moments I pull out handfuls of my hair, and sit contemplating them vacantly, asking myself what I am doing in such an absurd place as the British theatre. But, after all, this is the fault of Mr. Maude's quality. The last thing an artist with a strong sense of fun learns to do is to go over his work and resolutely cut out every stroke, however uproariously laughable, that is not perfectly possible and natural. It is the neglect of this critical process that disqualifies Mr. Maude from the classical rank as a comedian which is easily within his reach. Now that he is a manager, and that the author is dead, it rests with himself alone to keep himself to a strict account, and not accept farcical currency in payment of his obligations to comedy.

The performance of "The Tempest" at Steinway Hall by the Elizabethan Stage Society was only an ordinary platform reading, with the human personages in modern evening dress and the pageant-figures in grotesque costumes. It would have been more impressive had Mr. Hermann Vezin been able to bring himself to take Prospero seriously: as it was, he dosed him with dry common sense and colloquial realism to the verge of guying him. Mr. Poel's little brigade of Elizabethans got through the other parts very creditably. Mr. Dolmetsch has mastered a new instrument—the penny whistle—on which, aided by Miss Hélène Dolmetsch on the drum, he discoursed excellent pipe and tabor music for Ariel. His reproduction of the original music on viols and virginals gave a unique interest to the occasion, and led to the hall being crowded.

Miss Estelle Burney's "Settled Out of Court," produced last week at a Globe matinée, has some admirable points. As a piece of crisp, deft, vivid scenic projection of such character and situation as there is in it to project, neither Mr. Pinero nor Mr. Grundy could have done it better—in fact, they would probably have done it worse. The action is handled with abundant nervous energy and perfect clearheadedness. Unfortunately Miss Burney has let her imagination waver between two incompatible planes. Her heroine

is a figment of the old operatic school. She might have been set to music, with variations and flute *obbligato*, by Donizetti, or haunted the early novels of Miss Braddon and Wilkie Collins. The hero and his mistress, on the other hand, belong to the realistic repertory of the Independent Theatre. The result is that there is no real drama; for it is impossible to seriously connect a lady who is obviously working up towards a dagger, a maniac laugh, and a homicide, with an ultra-modern husband. The husband himself, though drawn from a contemporary point of view, is morally judged from that of Sir Walter Scott. Our drama is getting fuller and fuller of this sort of confusion; for the daily observation of our dramatists keeps them up to date in personal descriptions, whilst there is nothing to force them to revise the morality they inherit from their grandmothers. Confusion is always an element of failure, and is especially so in the case of Miss Burney, who is too clever to succeed as a half-and-half playwright. With some solid opinions, and an utter disregard of the theatre and the public, Miss Burney might, I think, give us some excellent plays.

Mr. Lewis Waller, who has been for some time past showing all sorts of valuable qualities as an actor—I mean, of course, above and beyond his old-established presentability as a fashionable leading man, by which I set no store whatever—played the hero in a highly skilful and interesting way, and rescued the performance from the fate which would certainly have overtaken it had its charm depended on the Donizetti heroine, through whose part Miss Janette Steer, frightfully misfitted, ranted and lachrymosed with a conscientiousness all the more admirable as it was unsustained by a ray of conviction.

G. B. S.

NO-OPERA AND CONCERTS.

FOR the last fortnight the Covent Garden management has apparently brought its whole mind and energies to a determined endeavour to play the fool; and I am doing it the barest justice in saying that the endeavour has resulted in a fair measure of success. First (as mentioned here last week) it announced "The Mastersingers," with Jean de Reszke as Walther, and at the last moment substituted "Tannhäuser," which was not very shocking; then it announced "Tristan," and at the last moment substituted "Traviata," which was so far beyond the merely shocking that it could only be called ludicrous; then it announced "Tristan" for Whit Monday and on Sunday found it necessary to substitute "Romeo," which was slightly amusing; and finally, after announcing "The Mastersingers" for Thursday, at the moment of writing it has determined to give "Faust," which is exasperating. Every opera-goer who has suffered annoyance and inconvenience from these changes must be itching at the present moment for some one to call this policy suicidal; but since Mr. Neil Forsyth and Mr. Higgins are gentlemen for whom I have a personal liking, and since moreover they are not in reality nearly so idiotic as their conduct implies, the intelligent opera-goer cannot expect me to say more than that the policy is childish. But should any one say anything stronger than that it may be taken that I am in tacit agreement with him; for the truth is that the new Syndicate is driving a nail into its own coffin with every postponement. The audience which spends its money on hearing the later Wagner operas is a very enthusiastic, but not a very large, one; and it has not a great deal of money to spend. Properly exploited, it will do more for the Covent Garden box-office than those non-existent subscribers in deference to whose supposed tastes "Traviata" and "The Huguenots" are dragged from their places of sepulture—treated as badly as Covent Garden has treated it lately, it will soon come to believe that nothing is to be done for it, and abstain from buying tickets for Wagner or any other performances. And in that case the Syndicate is doomed; for I declare that the audiences which attend the majority of the old-fashioned operas are far too small to yield a profit. Why the management should have played the preposterous games they have played lately is, I must confess, an inscrutable mystery. That Jean de Reszke has several times thought him-

self fit to sing, and turned back afraid at the last moment, is nothing: it might happen to any of us who possessed Jean de Reszke's voice and consummate art. That Jean de Reszke's voice is beyond compare, his mastery of vocal art nearly incredible, and his mastery of histrionic art quite respectable—all this I gladly admit, and indeed have often enough affirmed. But that Jean is the whole Covent Garden company, that Wagner cannot be given successfully without him, that Covent Garden cannot go on without him—these are propositions to which no critic in his senses will assent. If Jean is not in a fit state to play Walther or Tristan, there cannot be the slightest doubt that Van Dyck could do the parts excellently; some years ago the whole "Ring" was given with the most surprising success by a German company without a tenor to compare with Jean de Reszke; and if the truth should happen to be that Jean thinks Covent Garden cannot do without him, Jean might be reminded that he was not here in one of the most successful of Sir Augustus Harris's seasons—that of 1895. It is indeed ridiculous that we should have to wait so long for the operas we chiefly want to hear because a mere tenor has a sore throat. While I do not doubt that Jean has a sore throat, it may be permitted me to point out that these continued delays are giving rise to the grave suspicion that his voice is permanently injured; and while I do not doubt that the management has done its best in a series of excessively awkward circumstances, it may be permitted me to point out that if it blunders on in the present fashion—never prepared for the most probable accidents—every one will soon come to the conclusion that it is no management at all, but a mismanagement. At the present time "The Valkyrie" is advertised for Saturday evening; but who will venture to buy tickets and go all the way to Covent Garden doubtful whether he will not find it off and (say) "The Huguenots" on? Who will feel safe in giving up an engagement for Monday night if he feels certain that when he gets to the theatre "Tristan" will have been replaced by "Faust"? I humbly ask the Grand Opera Syndicate, Limited, these questions, and leave Messrs. Forsyth and Higgins to answer them.

During the week there has been scarcely a concert worth wasting ten minutes upon. The exceptions were one given by the Kneisel Quartet on Wednesday, and another given by Miss Florence Hughes on Tuesday. At the former a quartet by Mr. Henschel was played. Now Mr. Henschel is a musician for whom I have hitherto had no admiration whatever. His conducting I have regarded as no better than the piano-tickling which he calls accompanying; his compositions I have felt to be scarcely more tolerable than the hoarse declamation which he is bold enough to call singing. But this quartet in E flat must be admitted to be not at all a bad attempt for a beginner. True, it is Mr. Henschel's Op. 55; but then evidently Mr. Henschel is one of those gentlemen who might, but for some accident, go on for a lifetime setting down notes without ever realizing that composition is altogether a different business from that. However, he has seemingly met with the necessary accident and got at last on to the right track. Whether he has strength and intelligence to remain there is quite a different matter; but for the present this quartet contains a number of themes which, if somewhat vapid, can be remembered by a small effort for more than ten seconds; the "treatment" of them, if somewhat dry, is mercifully short; and the whole thing not only contains several pretty effects but really hangs together with at any rate an outward semblance of coherence. The Kneisel quartet—who are distinctly worth hearing—played it with finish and considerable beauty of tone; and the scratching to which the "Pops" quartet has accustomed us was luckily altogether absent. But when they finished with Mr. Henschel and began with B flat (Op. 67) quartet of Brahms it soon seemed time to go. As for Miss Hughes, she is a lady with a pleasant and sufficiently strong voice to make a little reputation for herself when she takes the trouble to cure herself of the habit of making a crescendo and diminuendo on every possible note, and also learns to favour her admirers occasionally with a genuine piano, and, when feasible, a pianissimo.

Madame Fischer-Sobell opened the concert by playing the first movement of the Appassionata Sonata with perfectly finished technique and some power; but her reading did not strike me as a very good one. Perhaps she will play the whole sonata some day; and then it can conveniently be discussed.

It should be mentioned that, the Queen's Hall Concerts having stopped for the present, Mr. Wood is playing in his orchestra at the Earl's Court every Saturday evening. Unfortunately the Empress Theatre is far too large, and the orchestra is far too small. The latter is described on the posters as consisting of "100 musicians"; but unfortunately some thirty of the hundred seem to have been detained by the bedsides of dying relatives. Perhaps in the fulness of time Mr. Kiralfy will see his way to make up the hundred without counting Mr. Wood as a host—or say thirty—in himself; and he might also take steps to enlighten the public as to where the Empress Theatre is concealed and to tell them when a concert is going forward there.

Next week there will be the Handel Festival to write about; but just now I feel with regard to my space as the Philharmonic Directors must have felt when Paderewski returned them the Beethoven medal which they had presented to him—that is, I don't quite know what to do with it.

J. F. R.

MONEY MATTERS.

THERE are still no signs of any material alteration in the Money Market, and the Bank of England Return this week has no feature of interest. On Thursday the India Council lent three-quarters of a million sterling for about a month at the rate of 1 per cent. per annum, and this is also the rate for three and even four months Bank bills, so that it is natural enough that Consols should stand firm at 113 "ex dividend," a price which yields till 1903 a return of £2 8s. 8d. per cent. The rumour that the Bank of England, rousing itself at last from a long lethargy during which it has done practically no discount business except in times of pressure, intends to compete in the open market at current rates is only surprising because financiers have become so used to the do-nothing policy of the Court of Directors that they find it hard to believe that that august body is contemplating any new departure, even though it may be obviously desirable in the interests of the shareholders. The argument that the Bank has no right to deal in the open market with the balances of other banks lying in its hands is, of course, absurd, and there seems no reason why this institution, with its large capital and unrivalled credit, should not take a leading share in discount business. But the fears of the bill-brokers are, we think, exaggerated; for, although the Bank might do a fine business, it could not attract to itself any very serious proportion of the two hundred millions sterling which the amount of bills current is estimated to represent.

In the Stock Markets the most interesting movement of the week has been the rise in American Railways, but we have no confidence in any sustained improvement in that quarter. Home Railways have also shown some advances, although the Brighton line was adversely affected by a report that it was intended to issue fresh stock. Foreign Stocks, although affected, as usual, by every puff of rumour from the East, stand in most cases at better prices; and there has been a strong demand for Spanish Four per Cents. South Africans continue to creep up, and we see no reason to alter the strong opinion we have several times expressed of late as to the excellent prospects which the best mines offer to investors.

Our advice to buy Henry Nourse shares was evidently good advice. To the surprise of most people, these shares have gone up £1 during the last week, and now stand at 7½. Even at this price they are perhaps the cheapest among the dividend-paying Rand mines. The Henry Nourse Mine is making between £2,000 and £3,000 more per month than the Heriot; the life of the Nourse Mine is, if we are not misinformed, a little longer than that of the Heriot, and the capitalization of the two is about the same. Consequently, if

Heriots are cheap at 7½, as we think they are, Henry Nourse is quite as cheap at 8½ or 9; and we expect to see them touch 8½ very shortly. We have noticed that large rises in price when times are dull are often justified by hard fact. But then we are inclined to be optimistic with regard to the best mines on the Rand. There is no other investment of equal security on which you can get 6 per cent., much less the 12 per cent. offered by the best Rand Mines.

One of the chief reasons for the weakness of Home Railways in the earlier part of the week was a feeling of disappointment at the Southern traffic returns for last week. The Brighton increase of £6,828 was accounted the worst, as it included not only the first portion of the Whitsuntide traffic, but also Epsom week, and includes the tailings of the month. South-Eastern Deferred fell over 2 points on a traffic increase of £6,091. Most of the prominent stocks have, however, been carried far beyond their merits. Since January Great Easterns have risen 12 points, and are now at 122, the result having been that, for some weeks past, they have wobbled backward and forward, doubtless from sheer nervousness. Among other notable advances since the beginning of the year have been 13 points on Metropolitan Consols, about 15 points on Midland, 10 on Dover "A," and nearly 13 points on South-Western Ordinary.

The Midland Company's stock will shortly be split into 2½ per cent. Preferred Ordinary and into Deferred Ordinary. The former will probably be about 87 when the yield is 2½ per cent., leaving 92 as the price of the Deferred at the present price of the Ordinary. For the twenty-two weeks to the end of May the total gross increase amounted to £177,000, so that the increase for the half-year should exceed £200,000. Allowing for an appreciable increase in working expenses, there should be sufficient available to permit of the distribution of an extra ½ to ¾ per cent. dividend for the half-year, making the dividend 5½ or 5¾ per cent. On the bonus of the higher figures the dividend for the year to 30 June would be at the rate of 6¾ per cent. per annum, which would give a distribution to the new Deferred Stock of 3¾ per cent., and this at, say 92, would show a yield of nearly 4½ per cent.

The success of the Grand Trunk Company in the Canadian Parliament in connexion with their Bill for funding the large revenue deficiencies will possibly afford some satisfaction to English investors, who hold a large number of the Company's shares. At any rate, the financial position has been improved. The First Preference shareholders are still a long way from a dividend, but the success of the Bill must appreciably affect the price of the shares. The Grand Trunk has in the past exhibited strong recuperative powers, and in spite of the keener competition the general improvement in the trade of the country is at least a good sign.

Our Consul at Philadelphia, in a report just issued, refers to the progress made by America in the manufacture of tinplates. In the State of Pennsylvania the industry has attained to the dignity of a "leading" one. The whole country, which boasted only half a dozen small and languishing concerns down to the era of McKinleyism, has now 175 black plate mills. Of these sixty-four are in Pennsylvania, mostly in and around Pittsburg; and all with the exception of two are no more than five years old. Our Consul's remarks on the process of manufacture bears out what we have already said about the radical improvements effected by the Americans in the machinery for producing tinplate. "It is now believed," he adds, "that with proper fostering the time is not far distant when the United States will produce all the tinplate required for her consumption." Pennsylvania alone is prepared, should the condition of the market warrant it, to produce for the current year from the steel billet to the finished product, 250,000,000 lbs. of tinplate, or fully one-third of the entire consumption of the whole country. More than one-half of the South Wales mills are now closed. If they do not stir promptly in order to

find compensation in the other markets of which we have been airily assured, the other half will soon be forced to follow their example.

The Cordoba Central Railway Report seems to indicate a fairly steady expansion in the industries of those districts served by the railway. Sugar has largely contributed to the receipts, though decreases are shown in wheat and linseed, of which 9,423 tons less were carried by the original line than in 1895. The gross receipts for the original line and the Central Northern Section show increases over the previous year of 11·21 per cent. and 8·01 per cent. respectively, these being on top of increases for 1895 over 1894 of 27·49 per cent. and 36·14 per cent. respectively.

The working expenses of the original line for last year amounted to 40·14 per cent., and those of the Central Northern Section to 61·38 per cent. of the receipts, showing reductions of 5·10 per cent. and 1·33 per cent. After the necessary disbursements for the original line on the £400,000 Five per Cent. Debenture stock, and the transfer of £9,000 to the net revenue account (Central Northern Section), the remaining £46,345 will permit of the payment of 10 per cent. on the Preferred shares, carrying forward a balance of £6,345. On the Northern Section there is sufficient available to allow for a distribution to the holders of the Income Debenture stock of 5 per cent., less Income-tax, leaving a balance to be carried forward of £3,167.

The United States recovered two years ago its old position as the chief gold-producing country of the world. Last year it still further improved this lead, the output being valued at \$58,660,000 against \$46,610,000 in 1895, \$32,845,000 in 1890, and \$35,000,000 in 1886. This year's figure is, in fact, the highest recorded since the days of the Argonauts, the nearest to it being the \$53,500,000 of 1866, the \$53,225,000 of 1865, the \$51,725,000 of 1867, and the \$51,200,000 of 1878. The substantial increase of \$12,050,000 on the total of 1895 arises in the main rather from the development of old properties than from the discovery of new deposits. The output of silver has also risen to 56,222,000 oz. (fine), as compared with 55,727,000 oz. in 1895, and 49,500,000 oz. in 1894. High water mark in this metal was reached in 1892, when, matters being more favourable to its development in the States itself, 63,500,000 oz. were mined. The progress of silver has not been so steady as that of gold, for reasons that require no explanation; but in 1886 the output was only 39,440,000 oz., so that the decade has seen a net increase of 16,782,000 oz.

That best of possessions—a cheerful spirit—which our contemporaries always bring to bear on their consideration of the Board of Trade Returns, seems this month to have been affected by the Whitsuntide weather; it is chastened, not to say damped. Of course the unsophisticated statisticians who think to arrive at the condition of the country's industry by lumping together the imports and the exports are all right; they are able to announce that the "total volume" (as they prettily call it) of our foreign trade has mounted from £279,911,409 for the first five months of 1896 to £287,541,925 for the same period in 1897, and they can say, Look how magnificent: an increase in our trade of £7,630,516! Prodigious! But less simple-minded enthusiasts are fain to record the uncomfortable fact that the swollen figures are altogether due to increased imports—the figure of this increase being £7,895,740, or, subtracting re-exports, £6,149,694—while the value of the exports of home manufactures and products has declined by £265,224. Another unpleasant fact which an analysis of the tables brings out is that the decline would have been greater by £412,013 had not our coal exporters increased by that amount the value of their ever-extending denudation of English coalfields to feed foreign factories.

The decrease of £265,224 is due in the main to diminished shipments of yarns and textile fabrics, especially cotton goods. The falling away in the exports of this class of articles has been as much as

£2,747,159, in spite of considerable increases in the shipments to America in view of the coming tariff. If we take count of our exports of foreign and colonial merchandise, the shipping trade of this year compares not unfavourably with last, there being an increase in the exports under this head for the five months of £1,746,046. But we fail to see how re-exports can be regarded as an important factor in our foreign trade. There are several interesting points in the returns before us to which we hope to make reference next week.

The annual trade returns just issued by the Indian Statistical Bureau for the official year ended March last enable us to see the combined effect of plague and famine on the commerce of the dependency. Down to September the value of the imports had increased by R.50,900,000, and the exports had declined by R.16,600,000. In October the famine declared itself, and the plague broke out in Bombay, and then came a "rot." Half of the improvement in the imports was lost, and the decline in exports was multiplied sixfold. For the whole twelve months the imports rose by nearly R.26,400,000, while the exports fell away by nearly R.96,650,000. In imports, cotton piece-goods increased, as compared with the previous year, by R.38,500,000, cotton yarn by R.3,500,000, and railway plant and rolling stock by R.11,400,000; while, on the other hand, metals declined by R.13,100,000, raw materials and unmanufactured goods by R.12,400,000, manufactured articles by R.4,950,000, and chemicals, drugs, &c., by R.2,700,000. It is interesting to note that the quantity of coal imported decreases year by year as the output of the Indian collieries increases. It has fallen from about 809,000 tons in 1894 to 481,000 tons in 1896. In exports, the heaviest decline was in food grains, wheat falling off by R.30,700,000, rice by R.15,900,000, other articles of food and drink by R.7,000,000, indigo by R.9,800,000, opium by over R.4,300,000, oil-seeds by R.17,100,000, raw cotton by R.11,200,000, other unmanufactured articles by R.6,250,000, piece-goods by R.2,900,000, and manufactured articles by R.2,500,000. As against the exports, which have declined, we have an increase in jute of R.5,575,000, in tea of nearly R.4,600,000, in cotton yarn of R.4,400,000, and in metals of R.200,000. The returns from March to September of the current year promise to be worse than those from September to April. The railway returns during the four months ended April show a decrease of R.8,800,000 on last year, the figure being R.87,400,000, as compared with R.96,200,000.

The latest rumour from China tells us that the Government has decided to take in hand the reform of the foreign-trade revenue system. Thanks to our representative at Peking, the "likin" duties have already been dealt with, perhaps finally. But there remain other abuses, and if something can be done to abolish them as well, one of the great disabilities to trade with the country will have been removed. The ambition, however, is so large, and the implied sweeping of dirty stables so stupendous, that one may very well doubt if any real and thorough reform will be carried out. An example of the difficulties in the way is afforded by the case of Fuchau, Canton, and most of the other treaty ports, where, exclusive of the "likin" office, there are as many as three separate establishments for the levying of duties on merchandise. All three compete, and each one regards the revenue collected by the others as so much loss to itself. The Maritime Customs exacts duty on imports and exports in all foreign vessels and Chinese steamers. The native Custom-house levies duties on junk-borne cargoes, and as steamers deal only with the Maritime Customs, the Tartar generals who farm this office in the various provinces have a powerful prejudice against the introduction of river steamers. Then there is the Lo Ti Shui, or octroi, which at a big port collects something like 50,000 taels per annum on goods brought in by road. If the native revenue-collecting establishments were amalgamated and put under a salaried staff, the Government would benefit three or four times as much as it does now. The Maritime Customs press heavily on nothing, unless it be on tea; but the others

are in charge of highly respectable mandarins who remit a specified sum to Peking every year and pocket the balance, which balance, by "squeezing" and the imposition of baksheesh, far exceeds the sum remitted. The whole system is rotten, of course, but the vested interests involved are so numerous and so considerable that it is difficult to conceive of any complete reform, short of the reform of the whole fiscal arrangements of the country, and this is a hopeless thing. At the same time, some little improvement might be effected.

The Americans can scarcely hope to secure the complete suppression of pelagic sealing, but they are determined, if they may, to curtail this branch of enterprise. Mr. Foster, it appears, expects to receive the consent of Russia and Japan to an agreement for the closing of the Behring Sea for a certain number of years to be decided upon. Armed with this he will return to London, and, according to Mr. Smalley, "expects then to be in a position to secure Lord Salisbury's assent." Possibly the expectation may not be realized. It seems clear, at any rate to us, by the showing of Professor D'Arcy Thompson, that while the condition of the seals is not satisfactory, the decline in their numbers has not been so great as to warrant such a step as this. We would like to see the protected zone increased—even doubled; but to close the Behring Sea altogether, in order to benefit the United States Treasury and the North American Commercial Company, does not strike us as reasonable on the basis of our own Commissioner's report. We trust that Lord Salisbury will not be bluffed into giving his consent to the proposal, which would mean a loss to the pelagic sealers of more than half their annual catch without adequate reason.

Our recent remarks on the growing competition of American cycles appear to have forced English manufacturers to recognize the danger. We hear that a conference is shortly to take place with the view of devising some means for meeting this competition. One fails to see clearly what steps are possible short of reducing prices and giving better value; but even a dim realization of the position is something gained. During the nine months ended March of the fiscal year 1896-7 the value of the American cycles exported was \$4,165,680, as compared with \$1,898,000 for the whole of 1895-6. During the past two years the larger share of the exports has gone away in the last quarter. If this holds good this year, the total value for 1896-7 will exceed \$6,000,000—say, £1,200,000—which is almost exactly the value of the English exports in 1894. Last year our exports were worth £1,860,972. In all probability America will beat us next year. It must be remembered, in gauging the significance of these figures, that the United States did not begin to export in any quantities until 1895.

NEW ISSUES, &c.

STEPHEN SMITH & COMPANY, LIMITED.

This Company has been formed with a capital of £100,000 in 50,000 Six per Cent. Preference shares of £1 each, and 50,000 Ordinary shares of the same amount, to "acquire, carry on, and develop" the business of Pharmaceutical Wine Merchants which has hitherto been carried on under the above title by Mr. H. J. Hall, and which includes among its wares "Hall's Coca Wine," a preparation, according to the prospectus, in great favour with the medical faculty. Its excellence is attested by some imposing statistics of the number of bottles sold, and one's eye glances down the prospectus for a corresponding array of figures showing brilliant and increasing profits. But nothing of the sort is to be found, and in its place there is the following amazing announcement:—"For trade reasons it is deemed inadvisable to publish any particulars of net profits!" The only excuse urged is that the vendor is taking the whole of the Ordinary shares in part payment of the purchase money; but he is nevertheless asking the public to pay him a cool £25,000 in cash, and to provide him with another £25,000 for working capital, without any details whatever as to the profits of the business. There is an audacity about a proceed-

ing of this sort which leaves one wondering whether Mr. Hall really expects that the money will be subscribed. We confess that we shall be astonished if it is.

THE NATIONAL TELEPHONE COMPANY, LIMITED.

Tenders are invited by this Company for 130,766 (balance of 250,000) Five per Cent. Third Preference shares of £5 each, at a minimum premium of 15s. a share. It appears that the additional capital is required "to meet the great extension of the Company's business"—whether or not owing to its having altogether got the better of the Government in the negotiations for the transfer of the trunk wires we are not told. The profits of the Company last year were £321,506, and the payment of the Debenture interest and the dividends on existing Preference shares left a surplus of £202,353, or more than six times the sum required to meet the dividend on the new issue. The market price of the Third Preference shares already issued is about £6, which yields a return of £4 3s. 4d. per cent.; and, as the security is undoubted, a tender at the rate of £6 a share may be recommended.

THE LONDON, CHATHAM AND DOVER RAILWAY COMPANY.

Tenders are invited for £150,000 Three per Cent. Debenture Stock, being part of the £450,000 of Debentures created last September. The new stock will rank immediately after the existing Debentures of the Company. The minimum price of issue will be 103, which would yield a return of just over £2 18s. per cent. per annum, or quite as much as can nowadays be looked for on Debenture stock.

THE SAN PAULO COFFEE ESTATES COMPANY, LIMITED.

This Company has been formed to carry out an agreement by Messrs. Schröder Gebrüder & Co. to acquire certain coffee estates in Brazil from the Condé de Sao Clemerte. The share capital is £270,000, divided into 24,000 Seven per Cent. Preferred shares of £5 each and 15,000 Deferred shares of £10 each; and £160,000 of Five and a Half per Cent. First Mortgage Debentures are also offered for subscription. "The purchase price," we are told by the prospectus, "has been fixed by the vendors, who have agreed to buy the property from the Condé de Sao Clemente in consideration of cash and of Deferred shares." This seems not a little vague, and the poor £10,000 which the vendors undertake to set aside, out of a total issue in shares and debentures of £430,000, for working capital appears to us disproportionately small. In spite of the favourable anticipations of the prospectus as to the 1897 crop of coffee on the estates, we are unable to advise our readers to support this promotion.

THE M. HYAM WHOLESALE CLOTHING COMPANY, LIMITED.

The share capital of this Company is £200,000, divided into 20,000 Five per Cent. Preference shares of £5 each, and 100,000 Ordinary shares of £1 each; and the present issue consists of 16,000 of the Preference shares, representing £80,000, and 75,000 of the Ordinary shares, representing £75,000. The purchase price is £155,000, of which £75,000 is payable in the Ordinary shares, and £80,000 in cash. In other words, Mr. Hyam is asking the public to lend him £80,000 at 5 per cent. on the security of his business. This does not seem to us at all an attractive investment; a rate of 5 per cent. is no inducement to embark in an enterprise involving commercial risks, and those who are inclined for investments of this sort can surely do better elsewhere.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE PROTECTION OF RARE BIRDS.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

76 SLOANE STREET, S.W., 5 June, 1897.

SIR,—Some of the birds named by your correspondent are not, I think, decreasing in numbers. The kingfisher has already been discussed. The goldfinch,

always rare, is very plentiful in the places which it has always frequented—for example, a little bit of open ground on the Surrey side of Walton Bridge. Of the nightingale we may say that there is a nightingale now in each bush where there has been a nightingale since we were children. The flocks of lapwing in the South and West of England do not seem to me to have decreased in numbers since I was a child. Some of the birds which your correspondent names have, no doubt, decreased. I can remember ravens plentiful on parts of the Yorkshire coast, where now they are rare indeed. Yours obediently,

CHARLES W. DILKE.

POLICE CORRUPTION IN INDIA.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

MULBARTON LODGE, NORWICH, 7 June, 1897.

SIR,—Mr. Reid has written a most graphic article on "Police Corruption in India," but there is something to be said for the defence. The plan adopted in Behar, of having three distinct road-tracks—a raised central line for spring vehicles and pedestrians, and side tracks (locally known as *likhs*) for the heavier country carts—is one that naturally causes some discontent; but the system is theoretically sound and reasonable in places where funds do not suffice to maintain roads in condition to stand all kinds of traffic. It fails in practice where the *likhs* are not properly kept up, and having myself had charge of the District (Saran) to which Mr. Reid refers, I can endorse what he says on this point.

As regards the particular case in which Mr. Reid's friend the policeman was "run in," I cannot quite take his view as to the final result. It appears from his own showing that he personally knew nothing about the matter beyond what he heard from the carters, whose assertion that they had scrupulously kept to the side-tracks, "which, by the way, were knee-deep in water and almost impassable," was to say the least *prima facie* most improbable. Very likely the policeman may have seized upon the incident as a fine chance of extorting money; but to assume that he impounded the carts without the shadow of an excuse, except his own rapacity, is not perhaps quite in accord with the rules of evidence. With all due deference to the Collector, it seems at least possible that in this instance the decision of the Judge was more correct than that of the lower Court.

I am not concerned to defend the Indian police through thick and thin; and can even cap Mr. Reid's story with another, of an incident that came to my own knowledge in quite a casual way. One morning while out for a walk in another part of the country, a long way from Behar, I came to a native homestead (surrounded, as is so often the case, with dense jungle), and found the children tormenting a little "squeaker." To save it from further ill-treatment I killed it, and was then told by the villagers that they were much pestered by wild pigs. Asking why they did not get a gun licence and shoot them, I was informed that they could not afford to pay four rupees. "What nonsense, when the stamp fee for a licence was only four annas!" (say 6d.) "That's all very well," said the villager, "but the Head Constable at the Thana charges four rupees." And this was said in the most matter-of-fact way, and not at all as if making a complaint. My friend the District Superintendent of Police told me afterwards that the *peshkar* (a highly placed native clerk) of my own Court made quite a nice little income by his traffic in licences under the Arms Act. So the police were not the only sinners. The fact is, corruption is rife in India, and it is unfair to single out the police or any other Department for censure in this respect. The appetite not only for taking but for giving bribes is too deeply ingrained in the native character to be easily eradicated; and considering the past history of India—oppression by the governors and submission by the governed during long generations—this is not to be wondered at. Whether continuous government by an enlightened Western Power, together with the spread of education, will ever alter things in this respect, is a question that time alone can solve. In the meantime it is unwise, and may be even dangerous, to make a

dead set at the police or other constituted authority in a country where perjury is cultivated as a fine art, and where the false charge, often supported by the most elaborate false evidence, is a recognized weapon both of defence and offence. The Indian police are human like other people, and considering what extensive power is (and must be) placed in their hands, and to what temptations they are exposed, the wonder perhaps is, not that some of them are so bad (for there are plenty of good men and true in the Bengal Constabulary), but that they are no worse. Had Mr. Reid's Head Constable read Macaulay, he might have exclaimed with Lord Clive, "I stand astonished at my own moderation!"

I am not a policeman myself, but during my service in India have had a good deal to do with the guardians of law and order, who have difficult and invidious duties to discharge, and I hope Mr. Reid will pardon the suggestion that there may be another side even to his interesting story.—Enclosing my card, I am, yours faithfully,

B. C. S. (retired).

THE MENDACITY OF HOUSE-AGENTS.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

LONDON, 5 June, 1897.

SIR,—Considering the missionizing activity of the present, it is remarkable that hitherto no special effort has been made for the professional reclamation of house-agents. I say "professional" because it would be a grave injustice to suppose that house-agents carry their office habits home to their suburban villas. More than any other class of the community they lead dual lives. In his modest humdrum way every house-agent is a Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. Unlike advertising agents, with whom the habit of lying may be said to be perfectly natural and even graceful, with house-agents it is distinctly a matter of education. Unknown to the general community there must be a number of commercial academies where young house-agents are taught their business. "Professional mendacity in all its branches taught by experienced ex-house-agents" doubtless figures prominently in the prospectuses. And the distinction thus drawn between the necessities of public and private life is ever afterwards preserved. In the social circle the conversation of the most eminent house-agent is probably as truthful as that of solicitors or even bankers.

The origin of the peculiar form of mendacity practised by house-agents is easy to perceive, though buried in the mists of the remote past. Probably the keynote was struck by the playful exaggeration of some mediæval auctioneer. This view is borne out by the undoubted fact that nearly all the house-agents of to-day are also auctioneers. Possibly it is this blend in their professional blood that is primarily responsible for the habit which so distinguishes them nowadays. Certainly what may be called the Romance of Commercial Lying clusters more particularly round the memory of that great auctioneer who once, when offering a property for sale, declared that it had only two disadvantages—during the summer the paths were so strewn with rose-leaves as to be well nigh impassable, while at night the song of nightingales was so full-throated and sustained that it banished slumber from the eyes of the entire household. But he must be a severe moralist indeed who would see nothing to excuse in so poetical a flight of imagination as this. Moreover, it is clearly just to draw a marked distinction between fictions from the rostrum and fabrications from the desk. The deliberate act of the house-agent is obviously more blameworthy than the hasty oratorical exordium of the auctioneer. The latter may fairly plead that he is carried away by his subject as he dilates on the manifold advantages of the chattels then under the hammer. To say "This ill-drained, draughty and generally uninhabitable country-seat which I now have to get rid of some way or another"; or "This mangy mare, spavined in the near hind-leg and blind of one eye"; or "This Britannia metal tea-service made to represent the best plate," would not lend itself at all to that special form of convincing eloquence which may be expected to result in brisk bidding and an ultimate transfer of ownership to the pecuniary advantage of the vendor.

Nor is this the only excuse that can be urged in extenuation of the auctioneer's habit of improving on the truth. A majority of his transactions are concluded on the spot; consequently he knows that first impressions are everything. You buy your tea-service, pay for it, take it home, and your wife proceeds to brew a dish of Souchong for you; if when the pot is placed on the hob the spout drops off—*quel dommage!* But you never think of going back to the auctioneer and upbraiding him with his malversation of the truth. *He* say the thing was the best plate! Nothing of the sort—besides, he has sold a hundred other teapots since then. If you are so precious particular you should have brought an expert and let him examine the spout. *Caveat emptor!* And all you could do would be to take the disrupted pot home again, and get a tinker to re-solder on the spout.

But the excuse of being carried away by the poetry and passion of the moment cannot be urged on behalf of house-agents. The fact is of crucial importance that the latter's manifestoes are all written, and for the most part printed. House-agents furnish the one conspicuous exception to the accuracy of the Baconian dictum that writing maketh an exact man. They pass all their time writing to persons who are in quest of houses, and their descriptions of "eligible properties" or "desirable mansions" diverge into exactness only by the merest accident. I once heard of a case in which a bishop was sent to view a house said to be suitable for an episcopal palace, and found that it had really been designed for a Palace of Varieties. Of course this can hardly be taken as a fair example of the habit peculiar to house-agents; it is so inartistic. There is something brutal in sending a bishop on so bootless an errand; and if done as a practical joke—can it be possible that house-agents as a class are not liars at all, but only humourists?—it was certainly not in the best of taste.

Extreme cases of this sort, however, illustrate the length to which men will go when once launched on a career of deception. What we are now considering is the ordinary treatment of the public by the average house-agent. Probably there lives no householder who, when a house-hunter, did not hopefully peruse numberless so-called "registers" in which are set forth the countless advantages of this or that house, only to find that a volume of Rider Haggard's is not more imaginative, though in many respects more amusing. How bitter the experience! The selection of some one house, seemingly more exquisitely situated, more superbly built, more elegantly decorated than the rest; the application for an order to view, thus affording the house-agent a *locus penitentiae* of which he never avails himself; the journey to the locality indicated, with the discovery in melancholy sequence that "excellent train service" means one train each other hour, with two changes *en route*: that "cabstand at adjacent hotel" means a stand but no cab, the hotel being a villainous inn patronized only by the village loafers; that the "one mile and a half from station" actually measures two miles and three-quarters; that the "handsome modern edifice standing in its own grounds" is in reality a dingy building of no particular design, with three flower-beds (full of marigolds) in front, and a damp lawn behind; that the "delightful views" comprise a field, a duck pond, a high hedge, and (on very clear days and from the attic windows) further fields and more hedges beyond; that, in a sentence, not a single prospect pleases and everything else is vile—such an experience as this, I say, goes far to justify the view taken in certain well-informed circles (connected with the Salvation Army) that the future of house-agents will be very dismal indeed unless some means can be found for awakening their (professional) consciences before it is too late.

In conclusion, I wish to advance a theory which has never before seen the light. I am of opinion that Bacon, in his essay on "Truth," aimed what was far from a random shot at the house-agents of his day. For what does the great philosopher say? "Certainly there be that delight in giddiness" (on the whole, perhaps auctioneers are more giddy than simple house-agents). . . . "One of the latter school of the Grecians examineth the matter, and is at a stand to think what should be in it that men should love lies; where neither they make for pleasure, as with poets; nor

advantage, as with the merchant!" When this was written it is improbable that house-agents had dubbed themselves professional men, but were the rather classed with mere business persons. "Doth any man doubt that if there were taken out of men's minds vain opinions, flattering hopes, false valuations" (this is unmistakable) . . . "it would leave the minds of a number of men" (and house-seekers are more numerous than they were then) "poor shrunken things, full of melancholy and indisposition." But "it will be acknowledged, even by those that practise it not, that clear and round dealing is the honour of men's nature; and that mixture of falsehood is like alloy in coin of gold and silver; which may make the metal work the better" (or houses sell the better), "but embaseth it. For these winding and crooked courses are the goings of the serpent which goeth basely upon the belly and not upon the feet." This is undoubtedly very severe, but house-agents must remember that the remedy is in their own hands. Let them at once burn their present "registers" and issue others compiled with some regard for veracity. Let them remember, in a word, that even the disposal of houses has a moral side to it.—Yours truly,
EDWARD MARKWICK.

COLONIAL TITLES, AND THE YUKON.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

CHISWICK, 7 June, 1897.

SIR,—Having lived for a year and three-quarters in Canada, and seen many Australians, may I venture to differ from your correspondent on the subject of Colonial peerages? They would please no one but the families who received them. The most loyal and respectable of the organs of the Canadian Press considered the hereditary honours that have been already conferred on Canadians a mistake, and the recipients have come to live in England. This is one objection. The wealthy—and these honours are only conferred upon wealthy people—would leave the Colonies, which so much require money earned there to be expended in them if they are to continue to prosper. Then, again, look at the very doubtful way in which Colonial fortunes are frequently made. Often by the ruin of a good many simple people. No additional inducement is required to promote this curse of Colonial life. Sensible people in Canada seem to hold the opinion that a hereditary peerage is a fossil institution which may be all well enough in the old country, but quite unsuitable to the new, where it would only introduce more jealousies and rivalries than there are already. It might have the effect of lowering the value of British titled folk in their eyes, when their own William Thompsons and Mr. Nobodies were made earls and viscounts, because at present they know little or nothing of the history of our Peerage, and associate a title with great wealth, a baronial mansion, and so forth. The great charm of Colonial society is its equality.—Your obedient servant,

A LITERARY TRAVELLER.

P.S.—So much English money has already been lost in Canada, that perhaps a word of warning may not be amiss with regard to the Yukon prospectus. I have been told that the Yankees have only been able to make mining answer because they press into their service, *volens nolens*, the Russian half-breeds in Alaska, who are a strong, enduring race. The Canadian Indians, as you advance north, know how to charge for their services, and provisions, of a sort to satisfy English miners, are very dear. I have seen the ground a foot below the surface frozen hard in July quite 400 miles south of the district to be utilized. Of course, English capital and labour can overcome all this in time, and it will be a splendid boon for North-Western Canada; but people who are dependent upon an expected dividend should make minute inquiries before they invest. I am afraid of an action for libel if I state all I have heard about the amount of work exacted by the Yankees from the Russian half-breeds and the conditions under which they have to work. Their convict forefathers can never have been worse off in Siberian prisons and mines, if it is true.

REVIEWS.

BIBLIOMANIA.

- "Book Sales of 1896." By Temple Scott. London: Bell. 1897.
 "The Confessions of a Collector." By William Carew Hazlitt. London: Ward & Downey. 1897.
 "Catalogue of the Library of the late Edward Hale Bierstadt." Two Parts. With a Portrait. New York: Bangs & Co. 1897.
 "The Private Library." By Arthur L. Humphreys. London: Hatchards. 1897.

THE volumes which we have brought together under a common heading are of various scope and importance; but they unite in proving that the passion for collecting books and gossiping about them is as prevalent as ever it was. The library is a subject about which reams and reams of paper are every year covered by printers' ink without any impression being made on the dense ignorance of the non-collecting community. Nothing is commoner than still to see a leader-writer in a newspaper of position gravely taking the possessor of fine books to task because his copies are "uncut." "He has not even taken the trouble to cut the pages of his books," exclaims the virtuous journalist, although it has been explained to him a hundred times that a difference of a weighty kind exists between "uncut" and "unopened" leaves. Not less does the outsider rage at the passion for first editions of Keats, and ask why an equal interest should not be exhibited in those of Scott. To the great coarse world of non-collectors the whole thing seems madness, and they will not have the patience to learn the method of it. Hence books of popular bibliography are practically addressed to bibliographers only, and the vogue and number of such volumes show how numerous the class has become. Even if nine-tenths of the students of these publications are smatterers, the total sum of those who cultivate a library must now be very great.

It appears that the large volume of "Book Sales" which lies before us is the second of a series; we do not happen to have met with the issue for 1895. It aims at being an improvement upon our old friend "Book Prices Current," and is fuller and more elaborate. The work is of genuine interest to the book-buyer, has an excellent index, and contains a great deal of valuable information. It is capable of improvement, however, and we are not quite certain that the editor, Mr. Temple Scott, has a sufficiently close knowledge of books to make him a very safe guide. We do not underrate the labour of preparing such a huge compilation, and it would be unreasonable to look for exhaustive knowledge on such an infinite variety of themes as are here treated. But Mr. Temple Scott certainly trusts too implicitly to auctioneers' catalogues, and he would be wise, when he does so, to make the salesman responsible. We will give an instance. Shelley's "Address to the Irish People," of 1812, is here described as "excessively rare, only two or three copies being known, suppressed by the Government before the copies were distributed." No doubt that was the statement made in the auction-room, but it happens to be incorrect in every particular. The pamphlet is rare, but not "excessively," and as to only two or three copies being known, a dozen or more could easily be traced. Shelley printed a large edition, and distributed the tracts lavishly, dropping them into men's hats and women's hoods, while the Government, as a matter of fact, never took the smallest cognizance of the event.

Another point on which "Book Sales," to be really serviceable, should be more explicit is "state." A book may be cheap at £5 if the edges are large and clean and the copy in admirable condition, and dear at ten shillings if the state is defective. Mr. Temple Scott, moreover, who has little sympathy with the rage for early editions of quite modern poets—in which we agree with him—is sometimes rather hasty in his conclusions. When he says that "for Stevenson's works the prices have slightly decreased," he is absolutely in error, as sales since the publication of his book have proved. The auction value of Stevenson's rarities, indeed, has this spring been so abnormally high as to

be almost prohibitory. To those, however, who suppose the province of bibliography to be bounded by the early issues of a few popular poets the data in these "Book Sales of 1896" should be instructive. County histories, American antiquities and early specimens of Gothic printing still command such prices as are scarcely known to the merely æsthetic collector.

The Bierstadt sale was the most interesting dispersion of works in English literature which has taken place since the library of Mr. Foote was put under the hammer. Judged as a whole, it showed a certain return to moderation, although it is probable that Mr. Bierstadt's books were not always in very fine condition. The poets of the centre of the seventeenth century appear to be rising in value as steadily as any class of books; and of this Mr. Bierstadt's library, which contained many interesting, but few phenomenally rare examples, gave evidence. The Americans show a patriotic zeal in collecting the first editions of their own leading writers, and the value of early Poes, Whittiers and Hawthornes has increased of late by leaps and bounds. It is questionable if this will be sustained. Perhaps the most curious feature of the Bierstadt sale was the competition for first editions of Sheridan's plays. Mr. Bierstadt's "Critic" fetched nearly £6, and his "Rivals" and "School for Scandal" £42 each. The position of eighteenth-century literature in the market at the present moment is very singular, and seems to be the result of mere caprice. Why should there be a general demand for the first editions of Goldsmith and none for those of Addison, or huge prices be paid for Collins while Pope remains neglected? Of these irregularities of taste it is difficult to give a rational account; but the tendency is towards their disappearance. Except in cases like those of Shelley and Keats, where the neglect of the author at his first appearance led to an absolute rarity of copies, the price of early editions is growing to be more and more regulated by the positive value of the work as literature. First issues of the classics of the language cannot, we believe, but prove to be, in the long run, a safe investment. The artificial attempt to create a "corner" in the small issues of younger living writers has already met with disastrous defeat. What has become of the juvenile rhymester who boasted that a set of his "works" would fetch a hundred pounds? The possessor of such a set would probably be glad to-day to part with it for a hundred shillings.

The well-printed and comely volume of Mr. Humphreys attempts to do for English collectors what was performed for France by that pleasant book of twenty years ago, the "Connaissances Nécessaires à un Bibliophile" of Edouard Rouveyre. It is of a more rudimentary order, however, and aims at stimulating the taste of less cultivated persons. People that require to be told that "books are much more amusing than billiards" evidently need to be fed with spoon-meat, and this is what Mr. Humphreys supplies in a very agreeable and lively form. His instructions as to the choice of a "fine copy" are extremely sound, and if they prevent his readers from stripping off the original boards of good books, and decking them in a padded binding with round corners, useful work will have been done. The rage for trimming away and even ploughing into the margins of books has nowadays considerably abated. Fifty or sixty years ago it was extremely prevalent, and has destroyed the value of many early Victorian first editions. It was even considered complimentary for an author to present his books to friends in this curtailed and gaudy style. We have before us at this moment the copy of her poems of 1838, called "The Seraphim," which the future Mrs. Browning presented to her blind teacher, H. S. Boyd. It was bound in apple-green whole morocco, with the coarsest and heaviest gold tooling all over it, and the design of a huge urn filled with cabbage-roses. The binder cropped the edges as low as he could, and did, in fact, as much as in him lay to destroy the value of what has now become, in proper state, a rare and very desirable volume. Early Tennysons are often found in this desperate condition.

Mr. Humphreys says so many wise and true things about the pitfalls that beset the unwary collector and the errors of passing fashion, that we are amazed to

find him falling himself into an extraordinary misconception. He says: "Fight against the first edition craze, which is the maddest craze that ever affected book-collecting." We know not what he is thinking about, and can only suppose that he is referring to the collecting of "first editions" of little people of to-day who never went into a second. That is well enough; but if he speaks of poetical bibliography in the more classical sense, we must directly contradict his hasty statement. In the formation of a library of rare literature, the First Edition must be the absolute norm or basis. The experienced buyer will come, by study, to learn the value of other issues, but to secure the *editio princeps* should be his particular and original aim. When Mr. Humphreys asserts, in all the pomp of italics, that "a first edition may be the best, but in most cases it is the worst," we find a difficulty in apprehending what he means. This is, indeed, to play into the hands of the Philistines. The first edition, say, of "Paradise Lost" or of the "Hesperides" has a value to the critical collector which exceeds tenfold that of any later reprint, however smartly turned out or pedantically edited. It is the fountain and origin of the text; here the author himself was at work, correcting, approving, passing his thoughts to the world; after all has been said, the *editio princeps* of a great book is the norm from which criticism of its contents must start. But Mr. Humphreys, we are afraid, was speaking on behalf of the second-hand booksellers, with their "handsome editions from the Library of a Nobleman." We can assure him that the world of books would not be sensibly poorer if all these were cast into the sea.

WORDSWORTH AND COLERIDGE MANUSCRIPTS.

"A Description of the Wordsworth and Coleridge Manuscripts in the Possession of Mr. T. Norton Longman." With Three Facsimile Reproductions. Edited, with Notes, by W. Hale White. London: Longmans. 1897.

MR. LONGMAN and Mr. Hale White have made in this beautiful volume a welcome gift to students of Wordsworth and Coleridge. The manuscript volumes in Mr. Longman's possession are four:—(1) The "copy" of the greater part of the second volume of the second (1800) edition of the "Lyrical Ballads," together with a small portion of the first volume, and letters connected with the work of printing; (2) and (3) the copy for the printer of the 1802 edition of the "Lyrical Ballads," being the sheets of the 1800 edition with the necessary alterations and additions in manuscript; (4) the manuscript of Wordsworth's "Poems in Two Volumes," 1807.

The "Lyrical Ballads" of 1800 was printed by Biggs & Cottle of Bristol. Humphry Davy was then superintendent of the Bristol Pneumatic Institution, and to him Wordsworth entrusted the punctuation, "a business in which I am ashamed to say I am no adept." Wordsworth disliked the labour of transcription, and in preparing copy he was assisted by Coleridge, by his sister Dorothy, and by Sarah Hutchinson. The beautiful poem "To M. H.," addressed to Mary Hutchinson, afterwards Wordsworth's wife, is copied for the press in what seems to be her own handwriting. It was intended to include "Christabel" in the second volume; on 6 October, 1800, this intention was reversed; "Christabel" and Wordsworth's "The Pedlar," that is, the earlier written part of "The Excursion," were meant to form a separate volume. Coleridge assigns as a reason for the withdrawal of "Christabel" from "Lyrical Ballads" that the poem was "in direct opposition to the very purpose for which the 'Lyrical Ballads' were published—viz., an experiment to see how far those passions which alone give value to extraordinary incidents were capable of interesting, in and for themselves, in the incidents of common life." Probably, as Mr. Hale White conjectures, the real reason was that "Christabel" was incomplete. It was expected that Coleridge would have contributed to the "Poems on the Naming of Places"; and here again he was a defaulter. Wordsworth's note apologizing for "The Ancient Mariner," notwithstanding the defects that the principal person has no distinct character, that

he does not act but is acted upon, that the events do not produce each other, and that the imagery is laboriously accumulated, was probably written with the full concurrence of Coleridge. It was withdrawn, we may assume, in consequence of conviction forced on Wordsworth's mind by the remonstrance of Lamb in a letter of January 1801. The unfortunate omission of fifteen lines from "Michael" ("Lyrical Ballads," 1800, vol. ii. p. 210), which led to the reprinting of a sheet, now among the rarest of bibliographical curiosities, was caused by these lines having been written on a page by themselves which was overlooked in the process of printing. Apparently when the sheet was reprinted a new list of errata (including some various readings as well as errata proper) was set up, of which two copies exist, Mr. Longman's and that in the possession of Mr. Craik.

We learn from the second and third of Mr. Longman's manuscript volumes (1802) that the recast of "Ruth," except as regards the omission of three stanzas following the line, "And such impetuous blood," was made after the copy had been transmitted to the printer. In "Louisa," designed to appear in 1802, the line "When up she winds along the brook" (1807) stands in the manuscript, "When she goes barefoot up the brook." The identity of Louisa has been a puzzle to the commentators. Mr. Hale White agrees with Mr. Thomas Hutchinson that Joanna Hutchinson was the original of the "wild-hearted maid." Two cancelled passages of the "Appendix" (1802) are now for the first time printed: one cites a sonnet of Thomas Russell, from which long afterwards Wordsworth adopted four lines in his own sonnet "Iona," to exemplify the "ordinary and less disgusting shapes which Misdirection puts on at the present day"; the other expresses Wordsworth's reluctance in censuring the writings of other poets and justifies his method of condemnation as not a personal impression—this would be inexcusable—but grounded on principles: "Without an appeal to laws and principles there can be no criticism. What passes under that name is for the most part little more than a string of random and extempore judgments—a mode of writing more cheap than any other and utterly worthless." We are reminded of what M. Brunetière has lately said at the Lenox Lyceum, New York: "For twenty-five years I have been trying to get out of myself and to become oblivious to my own impressions. We must not under any circumstances judge works of art by our own impressions."

The fourth manuscript volume—the copy for the Poems of 1807—is of considerable interest. Beside many readings differing from the printed text, carefully recorded by Mr. Hale White, it contains (1) twelve lines introductory to "The Affliction of Margaret — of —" (in manuscript the name is "Mary"); (2) a different version from that printed of the close of "The Kitten and the Falling Leaves"; (3) a merry poem, "The Tinker," in praise of the tinker's wandering life; (4) a cancelled stanza of "Resolution and Independence"; (5) an "Ejaculation at the Grave of Burns," three stanzas, of which two were included in the poem published in 1842, "At the Grave of Burns"; (6) "On Seeing Some Tourists of the Lakes pass by Reading; a Practice very Common," six lines; (7) a cancelled "Advertisement" in prose explaining that these short poems were chiefly composed to refresh the writer's mind during the progress of a work of length and labour ("The Prelude"?), and to furnish him with employment when he had not resolution enough to apply himself to that work. It was intended to name pp. 1-74, vol. i. "The Orchard Pathway," with a motto prefixed as follows:—

"Orchard Pathway, to and fro
Ever with thee, did I go,
Weaving Verses, a huge store!
These, and many hundreds more,
And, in memory of the same,
This little lot shall bear *Thy Name*."

"The Tinker" is a trifle; but the cheerful mender of pots and pans is a wanderer whose company should not be disdained either by Peter Bell or the philosophic Pedlar. Part of Wordsworth's philosophy lay in the honour which he renders to happiness. When he would gambol he has not quite the graces of his

kitten, yet he virtuously resolves to be kitten-like in his wisdom :—

"Spite of melancholy reason
I will have my careless season;
Be it songs of endless spring
Which the frolic Muses sing;
Jest, and Mirth's unruly brood
Dancing to the Phrygian mood!
Be it love, or be it wine,
Myrtle wreath or ivy twine."

But "Il Penseroso" all the time is observing "L'Allegro."

Mr. Hale White has forgotten to note that the manuscript stanzas of the "Ode to Duty" were printed (as Mr. Tutin some years since discovered), and were cancelled while the volumes of 1807 were going through the press.

OXFORD VERSE.

"More Echoes from the 'Oxford Magazine': being a Second Series of Reprints of Seven Years." Oxford and London: Frowde. 1896.

"A Selection from the Poems of George John Romanes, M.A., LL.D., F.R.S." With an Introduction by T. Herbert Warren, President of Magdalen College, Oxford. London: Longmans. 1896.

"The Cross beneath the Ring, and other Poems." By the late E. F. M. Benecke. London: Sonnenschein. 1897.

THE atmosphere of Oxford life is not conducive to the production of serious poetry. The undying charm of the city itself has its own poetic suggestions, but it contrasts too strongly with the restless, agitated modern life that fills the ancient streets and "dreaming" gardens, to be a source of anything more than a fitful elegiac inspiration in the spirits to which it most appeals. And apart from the essential charm of Oxford, the life of undergraduates and dons, stimulating as it may be to keen thought and speculation, is not inspiring to budding poets. The new collection of reprints from the "Oxford Magazine" gives a very faithful reflex of modern Oxford life, and any one who reads the volume will appreciate what we have just said. Nearly all of it is light verse, and the greater part of it is written by dons, who are far indeed from being immersed in the academic labours and meditations once popularly supposed to be their sole delight; who have many-sided interests, nourish no illusions, and keenly appreciate the humours and little ironies of their position. Very characteristic are the lines "Ad Lectionem Suam":—

"Though Truth enlarge her widening range
And Knowledge be with time increased,
While thou, my Lecture! dost not change
The least, . . .

And listening crowds, that throng the spot,
True Learning's cup intent to drain,
Will cry, 'The old, familiar rot
Again!'"

These are from the pen of Mr. Godley, whose contributions greatly preponderate in the volume, as did those of "Q" in the first series. "Q" had not Mr. Godley's polished neatness of phrase nor his dry wit, but the high spirits and vivacity of his verse, and the often delightful happiness of his parodies, gave a warmer and gayer atmosphere to the former collection. Besides, there is nothing here like that charming Platonic dialogue, "Agymnasticus," which is now a classic among parodies: the present volume contains no prose. Professor Ker's Chaucerian pieces are pleasant poems, and far more accurate imitations of Chaucer's style than the "Chaucer" of the first series, but they are by no means so funny. However, there are several good things besides Mr. Godley's in the new series; quite one of the best being the satiric eclogue of Researcher v. Extension Student, the Specialist v. the Sciolist, two bugbears of modern Oxford.

Mr. Romanes and Mr. Benecke, who died, one of them in his prime, the other in his youth, were both men of exceptional gifts, who were not poets born, but who cultivated poetry in some earnest. Mr. Romanes

was a man of science, Mr. Benecke a scholar; and the verse of each has the same kind of limitations, the same kind of deficiencies, and the same kind of interest. Though mainly concerned in life with the pursuits of science, Mr. Romanes had in him a deep and strong religious vein, which seemed to grow in power towards his death; and the best poems in this volume are the poems of religious aspiration. The sonnet beginning "I ask not for thy Love, O Lord," is striking from its profound sincerity and poignant fervour. And there is the same note struck throughout; sometimes with an almost painful intensity, like the cry of an agonized spirit. Again, there is the bitter knowledge of overwhelming fate in the sonnet called "A Hunt"—man hunted and overtaken by the hounds Decrepitude, Disease, and Death—which we have not space to quote, but which is certainly, as the President of Magdalen says in his just and admirable preface, "a powerful and touching poem." It illustrates also Mr. Romanes' radical faults as a poet, his lack of interest in, or mastery over, the technical side of the art.

Mr. Benecke lost his life in the Alps when he was no more than twenty-five. He had already made some noticeable contributions to scholarship, but his mind was of course not fully matured. And with him, as with Mr. Romanes, poetry was more an outlet for innermost thoughts and emotions than art pursued for its own sake. Hence the immaturity of this little volume is not of the kind which is atoned for by promise of beauty to be won later in a more developed style. Heine and Browning seem to have moulded the cast of much of Mr. Benecke's verse, in which are reflected the agitations and unrest of a mind drawn many ways and labouring often under stress of acute emotion, without, so far, finding peace or its true place. In the pieces at the end of the book, with their suggestions and paraphrases taken from the writer's classical studies, there is a more individual handling.

PETER THE GREAT.

"Peter the Great." By K. Waliszewski, Author of "The Romance of an Empress" &c. Translated from the French by Lady Mary Loyd. 2 vols. London: Heinemann. 1897.

THE main features of the career of Peter the Great are familiar to most readers of history; but M. Waliszewski has here filled in the details of the Tsar's life with a fulness and accuracy which have not hitherto been possible. These two volumes are a worthy pendant to the other Russian studies of the author—works in which he set the mighty Catherine before us with vigorous and Rembrandt-like touches.

There is probably no great historical character in which the lights and shades are so startling as they are in the creator of modern Russia. Looked at from one point of view Peter is a man of colossal mould, but judged from the moral standpoint he is infinitely little. It is pitiful to read of his villanies and cruelties; one rises from a study of his character appalled that a man should combine within himself so much of the angel and so much of the demon. Yet it must be confessed that Napoleon is not so vivid or vital a personage as the soldier and reformer who preceded him by one hundred years. As our author remarks, "Peter is Russia—her flesh and blood, her temperament and genius, her virtues and her vices. With his various aptitudes, his multiplicity of effort, his tumultuous passions, he rises up before us, a collective being. This makes his greatness. This raises him far above the pale shadows which our feeble historical evocation strives to snatch out of oblivion. There is no need to call his figure up. He stands before us surviving his own existence, perpetuating himself—a continual actual fact."

Peter learned to become a warrior in a good school—the school of defeat. Again and again were his raw levies beaten by the Swedish veterans under the victorious Charles XII.; and once, at Narva, the defeat was both ignominious and shameful. But all experience that is worth having is dearly bought; and Peter bided his time. His reverses administered to his troops a more effective and lasting discipline than any which

they could possibly have received by other means and conditions. The men gradually rose with their leader, acquiring something of his indomitable courage and perseverance. So, the end of it was that the Russian finally overcame the all-conquering Swede at the battle of Pultowa. This engagement was the first great step in the building up of modern Russia.

The first man to influence Peter in his work as a State instructor was Patrick Gordon, the son of a Scotch Royalist laird, but his life was cut short, and Francis Lefort, who succeeded him as chief friend and counsellor, exercised greater and more durable influence over Peter than any other mentor. It was he who initiated him into the sciences and the arts of civilization, and by showing him how much Muscovy was behind the rest of Europe in these respects, he greatly moulded the Tsar's ideas and aspirations. Considering the boorish and brutal nature which Peter originally possessed, and whose instincts to the last he did not always endeavour to suppress, he really made wonderful strides in civilization and progress, both individual and national. Having reorganized his army, he set to work to create a navy, which he accomplished in the face of difficulties that would have disheartened any other man. When he began his labours in this direction he was shut out of both the Baltic and the Black Sea, and the solitary port of Archangel was the only one of which the Russian navy could boast. However, he invited from Austria, Venice, Prussia and Holland skilled engineers, architects and artillerymen, and ships were rapidly constructed. Young members of the nobility were ordered to travel in foreign countries, especially in Holland and Italy, where they were to take note of all matters in connexion with shipbuilding and naval equipments. Other persons were sent to Germany to study the military art.

Peter himself took a personal part in the acquisition of military and naval knowledge abroad, for he made it his boast to shirk no labour, difficulty, or danger which he set others to encounter. Accordingly, he left Russia in 1697 on an educational tour; and in the guise of an inferior official of the Embassy under Lefort, he visited the three Baltic provinces and Prussia, Hanover and Holland. At Amsterdam, and also at Zaandam, he worked for a time as a common shipwright, and to the practice of shipbuilding and kindred trades he added the study of astronomy, natural philosophy, geography, and even anatomy and surgery. Accepting an invitation from William III. to visit England, this extraordinary man spent about three months partly in London and partly at Deptford, labouring to amass all kinds of useful information. It is both curious and interesting to read that while in England he was made an honorary D.C.L. of Oxford University. When he returned to Russia, he had in his train about five hundred English engineers, artificers, surgeons, artillerymen, artisans, &c. On reaching Russia, he lost no time in crushing the *streltsy*, a kind of ancient militia, and then he set to work to institute reforms. He regulated the Press, ordered translations to be made and published of the most celebrated works of foreign authors, and established naval and other schools. Arithmetic as now understood was also introduced. Changes in dress, manners and etiquette were forcibly inaugurated; trade with foreign countries, which was formerly punished as a crime, was now not only encouraged, but rendered obligatory upon the merchants; and the organization of the law and of the national Church was reformed. All this was very good and very admirable, and the reformer was well entitled to the epithet of "thorough" in his creation of a new Russia.

But now comes the reverse of the medal. As a man Peter was revolting to the last degree. The orgies which he led, and which he compelled others to assist in, were infamous, and a positive disgrace to humanity. His habits were frequently offensive and disgusting, and a perusal of some of the chapters in M. Waliszewski's work on this head would seem to point to partial insanity. Peter was likewise devilish in his cruelty. There is not any single incident in modern history more fearful than his suppression of the *streltsy*. The executions were carried out wholesale, and when the first batch of 200 of the condemned passed Peter's house, the Tsar himself beheaded five of them on the

road. He began with his own hands the torture of his son Alexis, who only escaped further torments by having his veins opened by the Court physician. Fourteen torture chambers were at work for days with Peter's enemies, or supposed enemies, the Emperor directing personally all these unparalleled barbarities. Many other fiendish deeds Peter committed which nothing can justify, either on the ground of necessary reprisals or of personal safety.

But it is a marvellous story, this of Peter the Great—with all his failings, his virtues, his reforms, and his struggles—and it has been told with great spirit by the author, who is able to include in his narrative many new anecdotes, and much other material that is practically new to English readers. The work has been excellently translated by Lady Mary Loyd.

TWO RELIGIOUS BOOKS.

"Sermons for the Queen's Commemoration." By various Writers. London: Skeffington. 1897.
 "The Influence of the Scottish Church." By Henry Cowan, D.D. London: A. & C. Black. 1896.

THE purpureal Dean Farrar leads a loyal team of five waggish divines, who commemorate the Diamond Jubilee in boisterous pæans of praise and exaggerated thanksgiving. Have we not Temperance Societies, the photograph, the sewing machine, the harmonium, the chromolithograph, and eighty-eight new Colonial bishops? Have we not filched four millions of miles of territory since 1837? Let us, then, rejoice without stint. Mr. Chaplain Murphy also reminds us that the Queen herself might have been slain like the pot-valiant Belshazzar; she might have chewed the cud, in clawed and hairy solitude, like Nebuchadnezzar; or even have been eaten of worms; but, after all, she has escaped from all these little accidents. In short, this is the funniest book ever yet put forth by Messrs. Skeffington, and Dean Farrar cannot fail, as usual, to beget certain smiles, as he always hopes to do, but scarcely the "smiles which have no cruelty."

Dr. Cowan is, like every good Glasgow person, an enthusiastic patriot; but he should not allow his zeal to outrun the limits of veracity. His theme is the enormous influence of the Scottish Kirk upon Christendom and especially upon our poor Macriden England. For this purpose the Kirk is made to begin with St. Columba, that broth of a saintly boy, and all his train of Irish successors, who are artfully annexed for Scotland alike in birth, blood, brains and theology. Waxing boldly general on the strength of one disputed passage in Bede, St. Aidan and all the Northern saints are claimed as purely Presbyterian and Caledonian, although it is exceedingly doubtful whether any of them except St. Cuthbert were Scotch at all. The early Kirk having by these means accomplished everything that could be done, totally disappears for centuries, and we next get a pæan upon modern Scotch missionaries, those pioneers of annexation, civilization and decimation. Then we rush back again to the inevitable John Knox, who not only gave the "character and mould" of our Thirty-nine Articles, patient as they are of a Catholic interpretation, but by his influence really overcame the Armada, bred our Cromwells, changed our dynasties and played all manner of Scottish tricks upon us, until at last we had the audacity to turn out those of the obtruding ministers who refused to fulfil the functions of their office. The ghost of John Knox, it would seem, simply rode poor benighted England for centuries, and is hardly yet unhorsed. The Methodist New Connexion is for Dr. Cowan one proof of it, the popularity of Chalmers is another, and the Dissenting aroma of the Church Missionary Society is a third. As for Ireland, we have all heard of Ulster and the Orangemen. In France there were the Scots Guards and, more doubtfully, English Duns Scotus, the author of Mariolatrous tenets. Item, there were Major George Buchanan and certain Waldensian, Moravian and similar Sawnies. Of course, the Reformation, American Independence, French Revolution, Home Rule for Heligoland, and other great movements are also really Scotch in their origin. Considering that the finest prospect a Scotchman ever has

in his country is the road to Berwick-on-Tweed, that the blue bonnets everlastingly swarm over the Border, that Dr. Cowan diligently searches for all the influences he can detect or feign, one is grateful that matters are no worse. The world has not been wholly trodden under the broad flat feet of the Kirk as yet, but too much so perchance. We poor English have been imposed upon by the deafening drawl of Scotch logic, until we have almost become a passive prey to the invader. Sawney, with a porridge-fed inside (like an office paste-pot), with his gluey soul and his green eye ever set on the main chance, now aspires to rule his ancient conquerors, and Dr. Cowan chuckles at the thought that the ugly thistle squeezes out the sweeter rose. His book is likely to serve at least one good purpose: it will put people on their guard against the influence of the Scottish Kirk.

THE BOOK OF NATURE.

"The Wilderness and its Tenants." By John Madden. London: Simpkin. 1897.

THE book of nature has been interpreted in many ways. Some students have passed their life in the jungle, transcribing direct from its pages; others have used the public library, gathering and annotating such experiences, and putting on them a new construction wholly their own. Each class of work has its place and its readers. But when a gentleman who has himself been a great traveller, who has camped and shot in the African wilderness, who has been present at the deliberations of North American chiefs, carried his rifle over thousands of miles of ground, hunted in Mexico, roughed it in Australia, and crossed many oceans—when one who has seen so much of wild nature devotes himself on his return to an extended course of reading, embracing the whole literature of sport and natural history and a great deal more besides, and embodies the results of his own varied experiences and of his vast collection of extracts in three volumes of close reading under the above title, it may be imagined that he has produced what is in many ways a very remarkable book. Such is indeed the case. Of Mr. Madden we know nothing; but if we are inclined to quarrel with him after a careful study of his most laborious and interesting compilation, it is that he has given us too many good things, a surfeit of excellently arranged extracts from upwards of four hundred works in many languages, to say nothing of references on every other page to the "Encyclopædia Britannica" and Government Returns. The whole would undoubtedly have reached and delighted a far larger class of readers had the author published it, as he apparently had some idea of doing, as a series of separate works.

For the variety of topics embraced in the three volumes under notice are bewildering; nor, we venture to say, can the author be held quite free from the charge of having wandered more than occasionally from the point. It is not our intention, however, to find fault with a book which we have found in every way delightful reading. We would rather give some idea of the marvellous ground covered in the space of fifteen hundred pages of a large assortment of types. And here let us once for all dismiss so trifling a matter in a work of this magnitude, and express our regret that the printing was not more worthy of the book. Typographical errors are too frequent; and a good, or rather bad, sample is to be found in the different spellings, both wrong, of the name of a well-known Australian explorer and writer, who is given in two footnotes as Favenac and Favense respectively.

It were easy to give a summary of the three volumes from a cursory glance at the voluminous analytical table of contents that precedes each chapter, or the very copious index, of upwards of sixteen hundred items, with which the third volume concludes. We prefer, however, trusting to the impressions of our recent reading of the book; and we seem to have been carried successively into every part, civilized and savage, of the globe. Life on board ship and in camp is described with such minuteness that we can recall the scenes long forgotten of our own experiences in wilder

continents, and this is surely a more severe test of the author's vivid manner than were he merely to bring before us scenes of which we had no personal experience. All the great phenomena of tropical and arctic nature—the blizzard, the tornado, the sandstorm and the cyclone—are described with a minuteness that one looks for in vain in many better known works, the author supplementing the most graphic accounts he could borrow with his own often attractive impressions. Roughly speaking, one-third of the volumes before us is devoted to the subject of practical meteorology, and the chapters dealing with tropical climates are replete with valuable information for intending travellers.

In another volume Mr. Madden's theme is sport, and we get a mass of information, culled from a number of sources and strung together by one who is obviously no mean sportsman himself, on every branch of sport with rod and gun, from tarpon-fishing to the capture of eels on night-lines, and from wildfowling on our own coasts to the pursuit of the largest African and American game. Nor is that field natural history, which should never be separated from such sport, neglected, and on the subject of bird migration, as on the contrast between the beasts and birds that dwell in the jungle with those of the plains, the author is most entertaining. The account of the disappearance of the great herds of game is accompanied by an eloquent defence, with which we are in entire sympathy, of the veracity of many travellers of the past generation, whom stay-at-home reviewers have been too ready to class as Munchausens.

Want of space, however, forbids our dealing at greater length with Mr. Madden's volumes. They are eminently deserving of praise, were it only on account of the enormous labour that must have been expended in their production. And they are more than so much delightful reading, for here are to be found an anthology and a bibliography; and when we say that the quotations range over all time, from the Scriptures and Herodotus, Horace and the Koran, Aristotle and Chateaubriand, down to Pierre Loti and recent impressions of London evening papers, it will be seen that the author and compiler has, quite unconsciously, provided the leader-writer with a new and undreamed-of vademecum. This, we venture to think, lies outside the province of the book as defined by the author, but that in no way lowers its value. He has expressed his regrets here and there at not being able to include chapters on a variety of topics—among them astronomy and "insect pests"—and the memory of the pleasure we have felt in reading his first contribution to literature prompts us to hope that we may yet read all that he had to omit.

NEW FICTION.

"A Peakland Faggot: Tales Told of Milton Folk." By R. Murray Gilchrist. London: Grant Richards. 1897.

MR. MURRAY GILCHRIST has tried his hand at a most interesting form of short story—the story that is short enough to be printed in two columns of the "Saturday Review"—and he is in some instances so successful that the reader is inevitably thrown back from the consideration of the particular work before him to the more general consideration of what can, and what cannot, be done in the small space of two columns. If, for instance, we are conscious of a certain dissatisfaction with the incident named "A Family Supper," we must confess to an inability to discover any surface faults that could afford a reasonable explanation of our dissatisfaction. The incident is not so big as to be crippled, in any obvious way, by its confinement in such narrow quarters; it is fully and pointedly recorded in the short space, it is not told or explained, it stands of itself. And though the incident is small, the drama which turns on it is highly tragic; without overstrain at any particular point the little incident reveals many big things. There is, in fact, no superficial reason why "A Family Supper" should not be a fine work of art, and yet, most certainly, it is not. No reader would pause in his reading to enjoy it, or linger over the taste of it. The scene does not sink into the mind; the drama does not catch hold of the imagination; in an hour it will be forgotten; and one would neither

wish to recall it for pleasure's sake nor be moved to read it again. It would be easier to find fault with another of Mr. Gilchrist's stories, "The Gaffer's Masterpiece." An old stone-breaker has spent two years in making a little model of the valley and his native village; cottages, trees, church and churchyard—everything is faithfully reproduced in miniature, even to the coloured glass of the church windows and the thatch of the cottage roofs. Mr. Gilchrist must have seen such a model, and it must have so caught his fancy that he cast about for a way of using it. Unfortunately, instead of allowing his fancy free play, he throws the miniature village away upon a story. A drunken fool, passing by when the old man is asleep, sets fire to it. "The gaffer woke when the church fell in ruins. He whimpered at first, but soon was silent. When the last spark had died he rose and clasped his forehead and tottered homewards." We are not taken in at all—we blankly refuse to be moved. The little model was charming, it sticks in our imagination; the burning of it is neither here nor there. The miniature valley did not take the author's fancy because it was destroyed by a fool's hand, but for certain entirely subjective reasons; and if he wished to write about it, he should have written subjectively. A horrid accident, a tragedy of this sort, cannot effectively be stowed away in six concluding lines. Such things require space and leisure. And with this objection we should be inclined to go back on "A Family Supper," and declare that, although it may be difficult to say where and why the shoe pinches, such a human drama cannot be effectively stated in two columns. When men and women begin to act they want elbow-room.

"Mr. Peters" (Bliss, Sands & Co.), by Riccardo Stephens, keeps us attentive till the very end of its closely packed 412 pages. It has an admirable plot of the sensational kind and one living character—the tobacconist's girl, Em'ly.

"Abbé Constantin" (John MacQueen), by Ludovic Halévy, translated by Thérèse Batbedat, is a fairly good rendering of the well-known novel. French constructions have been, perhaps deliberately, given literally in places where the English equivalent would have been better. The spirit of the novelist has been sympathetically preserved.

"A Flirtation with Truth" (John MacQueen), by Curtis Yorke, abounds in witty dialogue and anecdote, but breaks down badly towards the end, the plot becoming quite vacuously improbable. In general style it is the best work its author has yet done.

"Fierceheart the Soldier" (Innes & Co.), by J. C. Snaith, is full of irritating mannerisms and has a style obviously suffering from indigestion of Meredith and Charles Reade in equal proportions. Where the whimsicality is not over-elaborated, however, it is attractive. The book is a clever, freakish bit of writing on a stirring subject.

"A Lady of Wales" (Horace Cox), by Vincent Leatherdale, is a conscientious but doughy story of the siege of Chester.

"Kakemonos" (John Lane), by W. Carlton Dawe, is a lively collection of "Tales of the Far East." China has lately succeeded Kipling-India as a background for short stories, and these are among the best Chinese sketches we have come across.

"Merlin" (Neville Beeman), by Mr. M—, was a disappointment to us after "The Chest of Opium," in which the author showed that he knew his subject and could write about it. Let him stick to pigtailed and fat-backed Chinese corpses: he can show their gruesome interest to the public and they give him a province of his own; whereas unhappy romances of this type are being issued, we believe, at the rate of one penny a week, complete, with a picture on the cover.

"The Track of Midnight" (Sampson Low), by G. Firth Scott, and "The Birthright" (Bowden), by Joseph Hocking, would be sound books for a boy. They teem with adventure and fighting. Mr. Hocking's hero is rather oppressively muscular; and Mr. Hocking's preface is rather oppressively self-advertising. Otherwise, we liked his Cornish tale, more especially where it did not crush us with the local dialect.

REVIEWS AND MAGAZINES.

THE "Fortnightly Review" opens with an article signed "Vindex" on what he calls "A Plot against British Interests in the Levant." He is under the impression, not strongly supported by evidence, that Greece was manœuvred into the late war by the Dreikaiserbund with the view of enabling Germany to revenge herself upon us in return for the check in the Transvaal. The whole situation is ludicrously exaggerated. Who will believe that even with German officers the Greek army "may be moulded in a short time into a body of 100,000 troops equal to any in Europe"? or that the German Emperor will find in the Greek navy "the nucleus of a power which may be developed to formidable dimensions; while the commercial marine of Greece, controlled and fostered by Germany, will seriously menace our commerce in the Mediterranean"? The articles on "The Queen's Diamond Jubilee" do not call for much notice, with the exception of Mr. Salmon's very readable sketch of our Colonies and their relations with the Mother-country at the Queen's accession. England's good fortune is truly amazing; it is almost incredible that her stupidly blind policy of indifference should not have lost her all the Colonies. Mr. Traill's review of English literature in the Victorian era reeks with laudatory commonplace; our postal and telegraphic progress is treated exhaustively and critically by Mr. Henniker Heaton; and Mr. William Bear comes to the conclusion that there can be no hope of the permanent restoration of agricultural prosperity so long as the standard of value continues to appreciate. The first of a series of papers on "The Modern French Drama," by M. Augustin Filon, is interesting, but utterly without value as criticism. He actually believes that a volume of Dumas's sayings "must be placed on the same shelf with Pascal's Thoughts, with Montaigne's Essays, and with the Maxims of Laroche-foucauld!" Mr. Hamilton Aidé discourses amusingly on the celebrated Corsican bandit-brothers, Antoine and Jacques Bellacoscia; but he contradicts himself on pp. 890 and 894, saying in the one place that Jacques is still in the "macchie," whilst in the other we read that he died two years ago. Judge O'Connor Morris effusively reviews Captain Mahan's "Nelson," which he declares has easily surpassed the Lives by Southey, Laughton, and De la Gravière. In our opinion Southey has yet to be beaten. Mr. Joseph Rock treats of "The New Era at Hyderabad." On the downfall of Survar Jung, the future seems to him more promising, but the Berar question requires early solution. Mr. H. W. Wilson writes with knowledge on "The Naval and Colonial Policy of Germany." He thinks we are inclined to underestimate the German navy, but at the same time perceives that a war with her would involve less risk than a war with France. Sir George Baden-Powell contributes an article of importance on Imperial Free-trade, with reference to the Canadian tariff proposals; Mr. H. H. Statham thinks that the French are painting and exhibiting too many pictures at the Salons; and Mr. Charles Williams makes some valuable comments from personal experience on the Græco-Turkish war. A moderate number.

The current number of "Blackwood's Magazine" is just a little tame; though perhaps "Maga's" militant reputation, to say nothing of the very prickly appearance of her cover, is apt to make her readers unreasonably bloodthirsty in their expectations. Still, we feel as if we had a right to look for somebody's scalp as we turn over the pages, and we cannot be put off with Sir William's—we have seen it so often. The Opposition, as "Maga" has pointed out once or twice before, has been wilfully hampering the Government in its relations with the Powers; it has, moreover, unjustifiably encouraged Greece. But, in addition to these somewhat familiar crimes, the leader of the Opposition has had the audacity to back his opinions with the name of Canning, the Canning who in 1823 laid the responsibility of Spain's revolutionary troubles at the door of a meddlesome Opposition. In his article on "Retrievers and How to Break them," Lieutenant-Colonel Henry Smith brings forward certain principles which will interest the general public as well as the trainer; but as a piece of writing the article lags. Sir Herbert Maxwell describes the real D'Artagnan as he reveals himself in his own Memoirs. The intrepid figure stands very much as he is described by Dumas, except that in the piece of fiction he is stripped of the numerous *bonnes fortunes* which he could not so lightly have dispensed with in real life. And, oddly enough, the one gallant adventure, which Dumas allows the hero who really enjoyed so many, appears to be largely a matter of the novelist's own invention. The short story is likely to be the weakest element in an English magazine; but "A Doubtful Acquisition" is almost too blank to serve any sort of purpose.

Now and then, though at remarkably rare intervals, a short story that is something more than just readable does crop up in one or other of the magazines. A good many months ago, for instance, "Macmillan's" printed some charming Indian tales—two at least. Presumably the editor has kept an eye on the author of "The Wings of a Dove," for such things are worth more than many articles. The June number of "Macmillan's" has a paper, rather less philosophical than it should be, on the

abuse of dialect; a chat about the growth of games in America; and yet another article upon Nelson—Nelson and his biographers; and Professor Tyrrell criticizes Mr. Palgrave's "Landscape in Poetry."

Mr. Basil Williams points out, in "Longman's Magazine," how much importance lies in the fact that the great telegraph system in Persia is under English control. It is not always easy to realize exactly what is meant by such vague and weighty terms as foreign influence and foreign interests in China, for instance, or Turkey or Persia; and Mr. Williams's illustration will come as a welcome ray of light. Mr. Andrew Lang is revealed this month in one of his digging moods. The spade of research is at work upon Marlborough in "Blackwood's," and in "Longman's" Mr. Lang lingers over Pickle the Spy and Mr. Millar's criticisms. Miss Gabrielle Festing selects and arranges some love-letters written by Lady Erroll to the man she married late in life—John Hookham Frere. They are very entertaining. Indeed the articles which might be classed roughly under the head of memoirs form the chief strength of the monthly magazine.

Certainly it is so in the case of "Temple Bar" for this month. The journal of Countess Françoise Krasinska has already afforded material for a charming article in another place, and here is a second, also charming. Readers of "Temple Bar" will be sorry to reach the conclusion of Miss Rhoda Broughton's "Dear Faustina"; it has been a very good thing month by month. The author was paid a big compliment the other day in a not very celebrated journal. The critic picked out some of Faustina's most delightfully extravagant sayings, and then sneered over them at Miss Broughton, unconscious that she had written them with a full consciousness of their extravagance.

THIS WEEK'S BOOKS.

Art and Life and the Building and Decoration of Cities. Rivington. 6s.
Backward Looking: Verses. Simpkin Marshall.
Belgium, Cities of (Grant Allen). Richards. 3s. 6d.
Bob Covington (A. C. Gunter). Routledge.
Comines, The History of. 2 vols. (Thos. Danett). David Nutt.
Coriolanus (R. F. Cholmeley). Arnold. 1s. 6d.
Eastern Crisis and British Policy, The (G. H. Ferris). Chapman & Hall. 3s. 6d.
Ecstasy (Louis Couperus). Henry. 2s.
Ely Cathedral (W. E. Dickson). Isbister.
Ezekiel (R. G. Moulton). Macmillan. 2s. 6d.
Father Hilarion (K. Douglas King). Hutchinson. 6s.
Garden, Orchard, and Spiney, In (Phil Robinson). Isbister. 6s.
Girls at the Grange, The (Florence Warden). White. 6s.
Great Britain. A Tour through in 1793 (W. MacRitchie). Stock. 6s.
Impossibilities (Israel Mondégo). Henry. 4s.
Ireland, The Dolmens of. 3 vols. (W. C. Borlase). Chapman & Hall.
Irish University Question, The (Archbishop of Dublin). Browne & Nolan.
King John (F. P. Bernard). Arnold. 1s. 6d.
Klondike Gold Fields, The (G. A. Denny). Macmillan. 42s.
Labor in the Longest Reign (Sidney Webb). Richards. 1s.
Laramys, The (George Ford). Hutchinson. 6s.
Light of the Eye, The (H. J. Chaytor). Digby, Long. 3s. 6d.
Milton, The Age of (J. H. B. Masterman). Bell. 3s. 6d.
Monetary Situation in 1897, The (G. M. Boissevain). Macmillan. 2s.
My Father as I Recall Him (Mamie Dickens). Roxburghe Press.
Not So Bad After All (Nat Gould). Routledge.
Peakland Faggot, A (R. Murray Gilchrist). Richards.
Queen Victoria, The Reign of (J. H. Rose). Blackie. 1s. 9d.
Renée Orli (Henri Ardel). Plon.
Romance of Golden Star, The (George Griffith). White. 2s. 6d.
Ruskin et la Religion de la Beauté (R. de la Sazeranne). Hachette.
St. Paul's Cathedral (W. C. E. Newbolt). Isbister.
Samson Agonistes (Milton's) (E. K. Chambers). Blackie.
Sur les Marches du Temple (Henri Ouvre). Perrin.
Trick of Fame, A. 2 vols. (W. Hamilton Fyfe). Bentley.
Women Novelists of Queen Victoria's Reign. Hurst & Blackett.
Woodland Life, The (Edward Thomas). Blackwood.

The Editor cannot undertake to return rejected Communications. He must also entirely decline to enter into correspondence with writers of MSS. sent in and not acknowledged.

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